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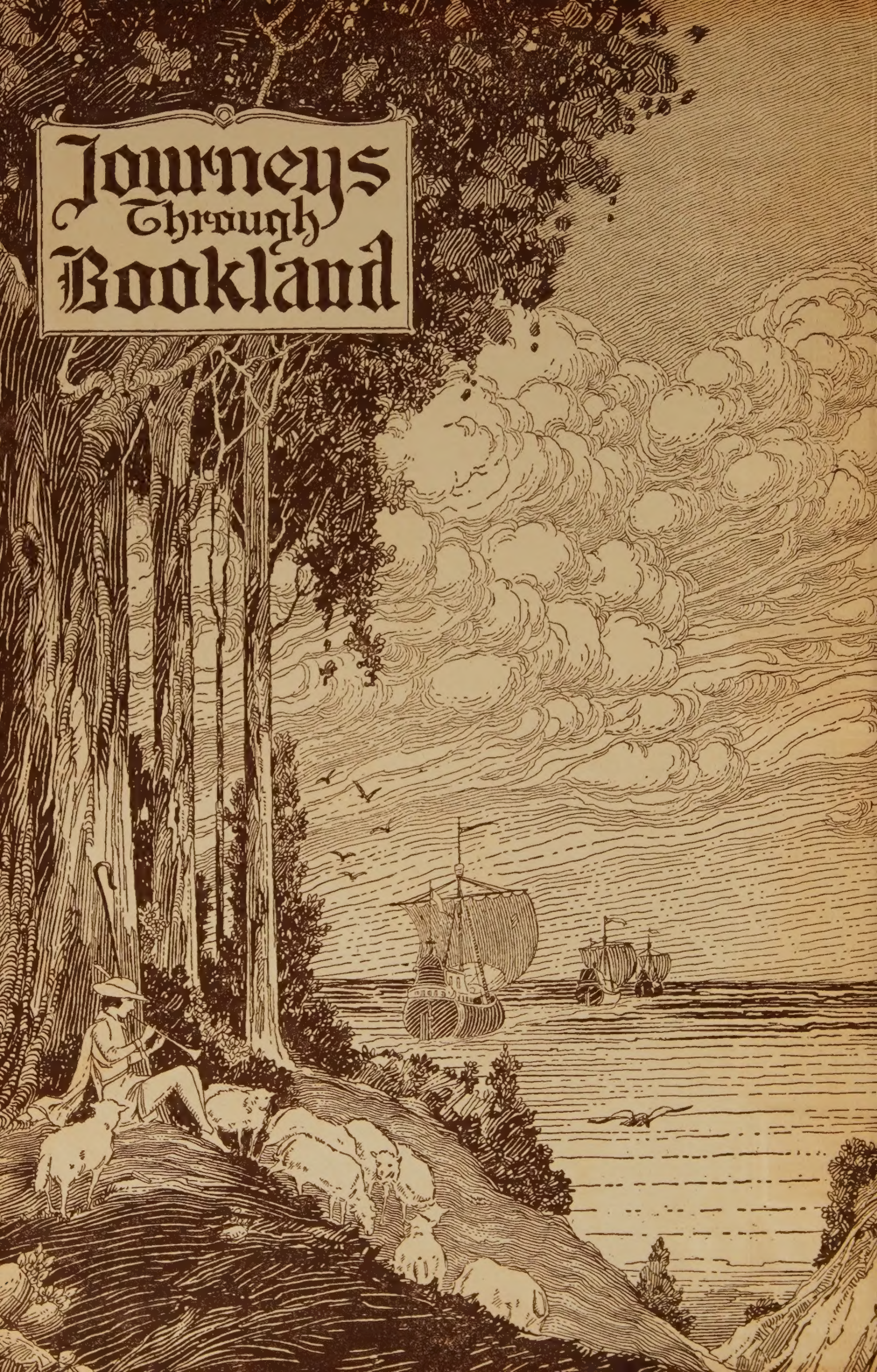
JOURNEYS THROUGH BOOKLAND

SYLVESTER


Journeys Through Bookland

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THE TOURNAMENT

Journeys Through Bookland

A NEW AND ORIGINAL
PLAN FOR READING APPLIED TO THE
WORLD'S BEST LITERATURE
FOR CHILDREN

BY

CHARLES H. SYLVESTER
Author of English and American Literature

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HORATIUS

By Lord Macaulay

Note.—This spirited poem by Lord Macaulay is founded on one of the most popular Roman legends. While the story is based on facts, we can by no means be certain that all of the details are historical.

According to Roman legendary history, the Tarquins, Lucius Tarquinius Priscus and Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, were among the early kings of Rome. The reign of the former was glorious, but that of the latter was most unjust and tyrannical. Finally the unscrupulousness of the king and his son reached such a point that it became unendurable to the people, who in 509 B. C. rose in rebellion and drove the entire family from Rome. Tarquinius Superbus appealed to Lars Porsena, the powerful king of Clusium for aid and the story of the expedition against Rome is told in this poem.

LARS PORSENA of Clusium[1]
By the Nine Gods[2] he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth
East and west and south and north,
To summon his array.

---

[1] Clusium was a powerful town in Etruria.

[2] According to the religion of the Etruscans there were nine great gods. An oath by them was considered the most binding oath that a man could take.

East and west and south and north
  The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
  Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
  Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
  Is on the march for Rome.

The horsemen and the footmen
  Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place;
  From many a fruitful plain.
From many a lonely hamlet,
  Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
  Of purple Apennine;

* * * * * * * *

There be thirty chosen prophets,
  The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
  Both morn and evening stand:
Evening and morn the Thirty
  Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white[3]
  By mighty seers of yore.

And with one voice the Thirty
  Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
  Go forth, beloved of Heaven:

---

[3] This line shows us that the writing of the Etruscans was done backwards, as we should consider it; that is, they wrote from right to left instead of from left to right.

Go, and return in glory
  To Clusium's royal dome;
And hang round Nurscia's[4] altars
  The golden shields of Rome."

And now hath every city
  Sent up her tale[5] of men:
The foot are fourscore thousand,
  The horse are thousand ten.
Before the gates of Sutrium[6]
  Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
  Upon the trysting day.

For all the Etruscan armies
  Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
  And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following
  To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian[7] name.

But by the yellow Tiber
  Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign[8]

---

[4] Nurscia was a city of the Sabines.

[5] *Tale* here means *number.*

[6] Sutrium was an Etruscan town twenty-nine miles from Rome.

[7] The Latins were an Italian race who, even before the dawn of history, dwelt on the plains south of the Tiber. Rome was supposed to be a colony of Alba Longa, the chief Latin city, but the Latin peoples were in the fourth century brought into complete subjection to Rome.

[8] *Champaign,* or *campagna,* means any open, level tract of country. The name is specifically applied to the extensive plains about Rome.

To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
The throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see
Through two long nights and days.

For aged folks on crutches,
And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
That clung to them and smiled,
And sick men borne in litters
High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sunburnt husbandmen
With reaping-hooks and staves,

And droves of mules and asses
Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of wagons
That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
Choked every roaring gate.

Now, from the rock Tarpeian[9]
Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
Red in the midnight sky.

---

[9] A part of the Capitoline, one of the seven hills on which Rome is built, was called the Tarpeian Rock, after Tarpeia, daughter of an early governor of the citadel on the Capitoline. According to the popular legend, when the Sabines came against Rome, Tarpeia promised to open the gate of the fortress to them if they would give her what they wore on their left arms. It was their jewelry which she coveted, but she was punished for her greed and treachery, for when the soldiers had entered the fortress they hurled their shields upon her, crushing her to death.

The Fathers of the City,[10]
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
With tidings of dismay.

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands;
Nor house nor fence nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia[11]
Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,[12]
And the stout guards are slain.

Iwis,[13] in all the Senate,
There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached, and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,[14]
Uprose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

They held a council standing
Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.

---

[10] *Fathers of the City* was the name given to the members of the Roman Senate.

[11] Ostia was the port of Rome, situated at the mouth of the Tiber.

[12] Janiculum is a hill on the west bank of the Tiber at Rome. It was strongly fortified, and commanded the approach to Rome.

[13] *Iwis* is an obsolete word meaning *truly*.

[14] When the kings were banished from Rome the people vowed that never again should one man hold the supreme power. Two chief rulers were therefore chosen, and were given the name of *consuls*.

Out spake the Consul roundly:
"The bridge must straight go down;
For since Janiculum is lost,
Naught else can save the town."

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear;
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

And plainly, and more plainly
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

Fast by the royal standard,
   O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
   Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
   Prince of the Latian name,

THE LONG ARRAY OF HELMETS BRIGHT

And by the left false Sextus,[15]
   That wrought the deed of shame.

But when the face of Sextus
   Was seen among the foes,
A yell that bent the firmament
   From all the town arose.

---

[15] Sextus was the son of the last king of Rome. It was a shameful deed of his which finally roused the people against the Tarquin family.

On the house-tops was no woman
 But spat toward him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
 And shook its little fist.

But the Consul's brow was sad,
 And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
 And darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us
 Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
 What hope to save the town?"

Then out spake brave Horatius,
 The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
 Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
 Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
 And the temples of his gods,

"And for the tender mother
 Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
 His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
 Who feed the eternal flame,[16]
To save them from false Sextus
 That wrought the deed of shame?

---

[16] In the temple of the goddess Vesta a sacred flame was kept burning constantly, and it was thought that the consequences to the city would be most dire if the fire were allowed to go out. The Vestal virgins, priestesses who tended the flame, were held in the highest honor.

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons[17]
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose;
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way;

---

[17] The Roman people were divided into two classes, the patricians, to whom belonged all the privileges of citizenship, and the plebeians, who were not allowed to hold office or even to own property. Macaulay gives the English name *Commons* to the plebeians.

Aunus from green Tifernum,[18]
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that gray crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath:
Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth:
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three:
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

[18] A discussion as to who these chiefs were, or as to where the places mentioned were located, would be profitless. The notes attempt to give only such information as will aid in understanding the story.

Herminius smote down Aruns:
  Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
  Horatius sent a blow.
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate!
  No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's[19] hinds[20] shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
  Thy thrice accursed sail."

But now no sound of laughter
  Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamor
  From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' lengths from the entrance
  Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
  To win the narrow way.

But hark! the cry is Astur:
  And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
  Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
  Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
  Which none but he can wield.

He smiled on those bold Romans
  A smile serene and high;

---

[19] *Campania* is another name for the campagna.

[20] *Hinds* here means *peasants.*

"LIE THERE," HE CRIED, "FELL PIRATE!"

He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
  And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter[21]
  Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
  If Astur clears the way?"

Then, whirling up his broadsword
  With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
  And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
  Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
  To see the red blood flow.

He reeled, and on Herminius
  He leaned one breathing-space;
Then, like a wild-cat mad with wounds,
  Sprang right at Astur's face.
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet,
  So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a handbreadth out
  Behind the Tuscan's head.

And the great Lord of Luna
  Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
  A thunder-smitten oak.

[21] Romulus, the founder of Rome, and Remus, his brother, were, according to the legend, rescued and brought up by a she-wolf, after they had been cast into the Tiber to die.

Far o'er the crashing forest
  The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
  Gaze on the blasted head.

On Astur's throat Horatius
  Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
  Ere he wrenched out the steel.
"And see," he cried, "the welcome,
  Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
  To taste our Roman cheer?"

But at his haughty challenge
  A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath and shame and dread,
  Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
  Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
  Were round the fatal place.

But all Etruria's noblest
  Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
  In the path the dauntless Three:
And, from the ghastly entrance
  Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
  Lies amidst bones and blood.

Was none who would be foremost
  To lead such dire attack:
But those behind cried "Forward!"
  And those before cried "Back!"
And backward now and forward
  Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
  Dies fitfully away.

Yet one man for one moment
  Stood out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
  And they gave him greeting loud,
"Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
  Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
  Here lies the road to Rome."

Thrice looked he at the city;
  Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
  And thrice turned back in dread;
And, white with fear and hatred,
  Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
  The bravest Tuscans lay.

But meanwhile axe and lever
  Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
  Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
  Loud cried the Fathers all.

"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
  Back, ere the ruin fall!"

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
  Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
  They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
  And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
  They would have crossed once more.

But with a crash like thunder
  Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
  Lay right athwart the stream;
And a long shout of triumph
  Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
  Was splashed the yellow foam.

And, like a horse unbroken
  When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
  And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
  Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
  Rushed headlong to the sea.

Alone stood brave Horatius,
  But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
  And the broad flood behind.

"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace."

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus naught spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus[22]
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

"O Tiber! father Tiber![23]
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back
Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,

---

22. The Palatine is one of the seven hills of Rome.

23. The Romans personified the Tiber River, and even offered prayers to it.

And even the ranks of Tuscany
  Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
  Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing,
  And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor,
  And spent with changing blows:
And oft they thought him sinking,
  But still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
  In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
  Safe to the landing-place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
  By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
  Bore bravely up his chin.

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;
  "Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
  We should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
  "And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
  Was never seen before."

And now he feels the bottom;
  Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
  To press his gory hands;

And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plow from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

It stands in the Comitium,[24]
Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian[25] home;
And wives still pray to Juno[26]
For boys with hearts as bold

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[24] The Comitium was the old Roman polling-place, a square situated between the Forum and the Senate House.

[25] The Volscians were among the most determined of the Italian enemies of Rome.

[26] Juno was the goddess who was thought of as presiding over marriage and the birth of children.

As his who kept the bridge so well
  In the brave days of old.

And in the nights of winter,
  When the cold north-winds blow,

HORATIUS IN HIS HARNESS, HALTING UPON ONE KNEE

And the long howling of the wolves
  Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
  Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
  Roar louder yet within:

When the oldest cask is opened,
  And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
  And the kid turns on the spit;

When young and old in circle
  Around the firebrands close;
And the girls are weaving baskets,
  And the lads are shaping bows;

When the goodman mends his armor,
  And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
  Goes flashing through the loom,—
With weeping and with laughter
  Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
  In the brave days of old.[27]

[27] You can tell from these last three stanzas, that Macaulay is writing his poem, not as an Englishman of the nineteenth century, but as if he were a Roman in the days when Rome, though powerful, had not yet become the luxurious city which it afterward was. That is, he thought of himself as writing in the days of the Republic, not in the days of the Empire.

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

By Thomas Campbell

A CHIEFTAIN, to the Highlands bound,
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound,
To row us o'er the ferry."

"Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?"
"O, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this Lord Ullin's daughter.

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

"His horsemen hard behind us ride;
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?"

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight.
"I'll go, my chief—I'm ready;
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady:

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;

So though the waves are raging white,
  I'll row you o'er the ferry."

"BOATMAN, DO NOT TARRY!"

By this the storm grew loud apace,
  The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
  Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
  And as the night grew drearer,

Adown the glen rode armed men,
  Their trampling sounded nearer.

"O haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
  "Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
  But not an angry father."

The boat had left a stormy land,
  A stormy sea before her,—
When, oh! too strong for human hand,
  The tempest gather'd o'er her.

And still they row'd amidst the roar
  Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reach'd that fatal shore,
  His wrath was changed to wailing.

For sore dismay'd, through storm and shade,
  His child he did discover:—
One lovely hand she stretch'd for aid,
  And one was round her lover.

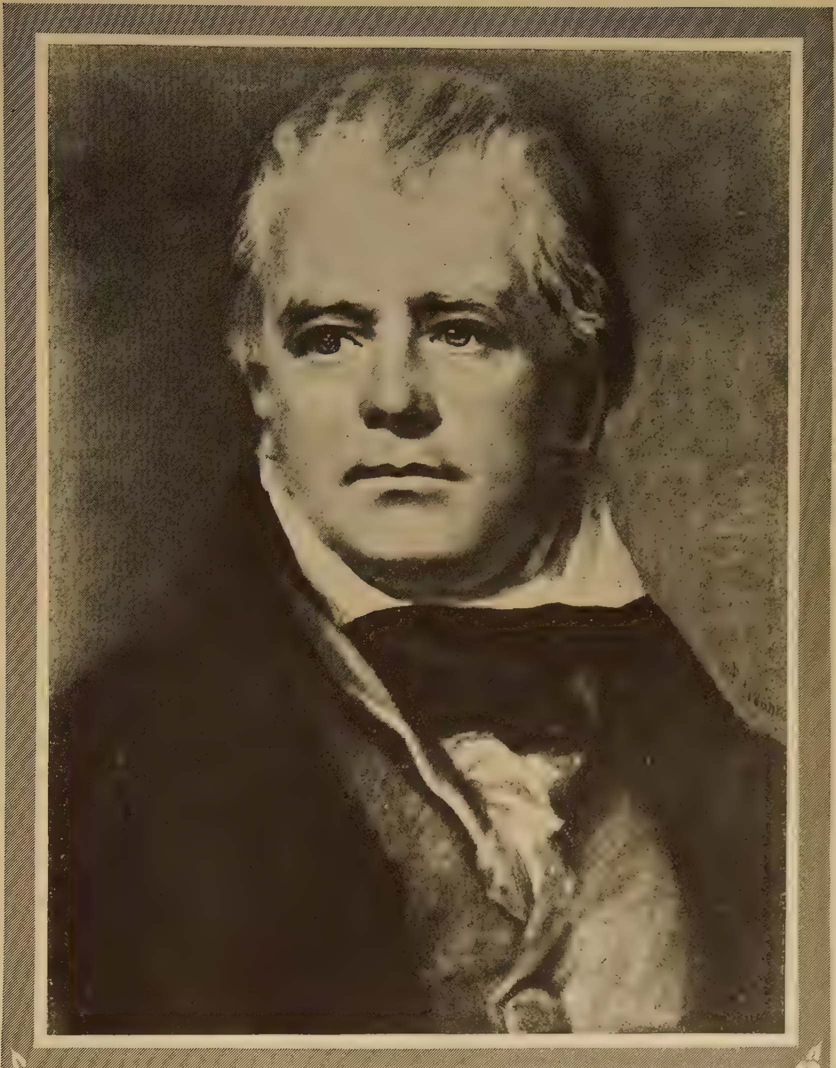
"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief,
  "Across this stormy water:
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
  My daughter!—oh my daughter!"

'Twas vain: the loud waves lashed the shore,
  Return or aid preventing;
The waters wild went o'er his child,
  And he was left lamenting.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

By Grace E. Sellon

OF the old and honorable families of Scotland there are perhaps none more worthy than those from which were descended the parents of Sir Walter Scott. In the long line of ancestors on either side were fearless knights and bold chiefs of the Scottish Border whose adventures became a delightful heritage to the little boy born into the Edinburgh family of Scott in 1771. Perhaps his natural liking for strange and exciting events would have made him even more eager than other children to be told fairy stories and tales of real heroes of his own land. But even had this not been so, the way in which he was forced to spend his early childhood was such that entertainment of this kind was about all that he could enjoy. He was not two years old when, after a brief illness, he lost the use of one of his legs and thus became unable to run about as before, or even to stand. Soon afterward he was sent to his grandfather's farm at Sandy-Knowe, where it was thought that the country life would help him. There he spent his days in listening to lively stories of Scotsmen who had lived in the brave and rollicking fashion of Robin Hood, in being read to by his aunt or in lying out among the rocks, cared for by his grandfather's old shepherd. When thus out of doors he found so



Sir Walter Scott
1771–1832

much of interest about him that he could not lie still and would try so hard to move himself about that at length he became able to rise to his feet and even to walk and run.

Except for his lameness, he grew so well and strong that when he was about eight years old he was placed with his brothers in the upper class of the Edinburgh grammar school, known as the High School. Though he had had some lessons in Latin with a private tutor, he was behind his class in this subject, and being a high-spirited and sensitive boy, he felt rather keenly this disadvantage. Perhaps the fact that he could not be one of the leaders of his class made him careless; at any rate, he could never be depended upon to prepare his lesson, and at no time did he make a consistently good record. However, he found not a little comfort for his failure as a student in his popularity as a storyteller and kind-hearted comrade. Among the boys of his own rank in the school he won great admiration for his never-ending supply of exciting narratives and his willingness to give help upon lessons that he would otherwise have left undone.

At the end of three years his class was promoted, and he found the new teacher much more to his liking. Indeed, his ability to appreciate the meaning and beauty of the Latin works studied became recognized: he began to make translations in verse that won praise, and, with a new feeling of distinction, he was thus urged on to earnest efforts. After leaving this school, he continued his excellent progress in the study of Latin for a short time under a teacher in the village of Kelso, where he had gone to visit an aunt.

Meanwhile his hours out of school were spent in ways most pleasing to his lively imagination. His lameness did not debar him from the most active sports, nor even from the vigorous encounters in which, either with a single opponent or with company set against company, the Scotch schoolboys defended their reputation as hard fighters. One of these skirmishes that made a lasting impression upon Walter Scott he himself tells us of, and his biographer, Lockhart, has quoted it in describing the hardy boyhood days of the great writer. It frequently happened that bands of children from different parts of Edinburgh would wage war with each other, fighting with stones and clubs and other like weapons. Perhaps the city authorities thought that these miniature battles afforded good training: at least the police seem not to have interfered. The boys in the neighborhood where Walter lived had formed a company that had been given a beautiful standard by a young noblewoman. This company fought every week with a band composed of boys of the poorer classes. The leader of the latter was a fine-looking young fellow who bore himself as bravely as any chieftain. In the midst of a hotly fought contest, this boy had all but captured the enemy's proudly erected standard when he was struck severely to the ground with a cruelly heavy weapon. The dismayed companies fled in all directions, and the lad was taken to the hospital. In a few days, however, he recovered; and then it was that through a friendly baker Walter Scott and his brothers were able to get word to their mistreated opponent and to offer a sum of money in token of their regret. But Green-breeks, as the young leader had been dubbed, refused to accept this, and said besides that they might be sure of his not telling what he knew of the affair in which he had been hurt, for he felt it a disgrace to be a talebearer. This generous conduct so impressed young Scott and his companions that always afterward the fighting was fair.

It must have been with not a little difficulty that this warlike spirit was subdued and made obedient to the strict rules observed in the Presbyterian home on Sunday. To a boy whose mind was filled with stirring deeds of adventure and all sorts of vivid legends and romances, the long, gloomy services seemed a tiresome burden. Monday, however, brought new opportunities for reading favorite poets and works of history and travel, and many were the spare moments through the week that were spent thus. The marvelous characters and incidents in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* were a never-ending source of enjoyment, and later Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* was discovered by the young reader with a gladness that made him forget everything else in the world. "I remember well," he has written, "the spot where I read these volumes for the first time. It was beneath a huge platanus tree, in the ruins of what had been intended for an old-fashioned arbor in the garden I have mentioned. The summer day sped onward so fast that, notwithstanding the sharp appetite of thirteen, I forgot the hour of dinner, was sought for with anxiety, and was found still entranced in my intellectual banquet. To read and to remember was in this instance the same thing, and henceforth I overwhelmed my schoolfellows, and all who would hearken to me, with tragical recitations from the ballads of Bishop Percy. The first time, too, I could scrape a few shillings together, which were not common occurrences with me, I bought unto myself a copy of these beloved volumes; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm."

After his return from Kelso, Walter was sent to college, but with no better results than in the early years at the High School. The Latin teacher was so mild in his requirements that it was easy to neglect the lessons, and in beginning the study of Greek the boy was again at a disadvantage, for nearly all his classmates, unlike himself, knew a little of the language. He was scarcely more successful in a private course in mathematics, but did well in his classes in moral philosophy. History and civil and municipal law completed his list of studies. So meager did this education seem that in later years Scott wrote in a brief autobiography, "If, however, it should ever fall to the lot of youth to peruse these pages—let such a reader remember that it is with the deepest regret that I recollect in my manhood the opportunities of learning which I neglected in my youth: that through every part of my literary career I have felt pinched and hampered by my own ignorance: and that I would at this moment give half the reputation I have had the good fortune to acquire, if by doing so I could rest the remaining part upon a sound foundation of learning and science."

It had been decided that Walter should follow his father's profession, that of the law, and accordingly he entered his father's office, to serve a five

Abbottsford

years' apprenticeship. Though it may seem surprising, in view of his former indolence, it is true that he gave himself to his work with great industry. At the same time, however, he continued to read stories of adventure and history and other similar works with as much zest as ever, and entered into an agreement with a friend whereby each was to entertain the other with original romances. The monotony of office duties was also relieved by many trips about the country, in which the keenest delight was felt in natural beauties and in the historical associations of old ruins and battlefields and other places of like interest. Then, too, there were literary societies that advanced the young law-apprentice both intellectually and socially. Thus the years with his father passed. Then, as he was to prepare himself for admission to the bar, he entered law classes in the University of Edinburgh, with the result that in 1792 he was admitted into the Faculty of Advocates.

The first years of his practice, though not without profit, might have seemed dull and irksome to the young lawyer, had not his summers been spent in journeys about Scotland in which he came into possession of a wealth of popular legends and ballads. It was during one of these excursions, made in 1797, that he met the attractive young French woman, Charlotte Carpenter, who a few months later became his wife. A previous and unfortunate love affair had considerably sobered Scott's ardent nature, but his friendship and marriage with Miss Carpenter brought him much of the happiness of which he had believed himself to have been deprived.

The young couple spent their winters in Edinburgh and their summers at the suburb Lasswade. During the resting time passed in the country cottage, Scott found enjoyment in composing poems based upon some of the legends and superstitions with which he had become familiar in his jaunts among ruined castles and scenes in the Highlands. Some of these verses, shown in an offhand manner to James Ballantyne, who was the head of a printing establishment in Kelso, met with such favorable recognition that Scott was encouraged to lay bare to his friend a plan that had been forming in his mind for publishing a great collection of Scotch ballads. As a result Scott entered upon the work of editing them and by 1803 had published the three volumes of his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.* So successful was this venture that shortly afterward he began the *Lay of the Last Minstrel,* a lengthy poem in which his keen interest in the thrilling history of the Scottish Border found full expression. This poem, published in 1805, was heartily welcomed, and opened to its author the career for which he was best fitted.

The popularity of the *Lay,* together with the fact that the young poet had won no honors as an advocate, doubtless accounts for his retiring from the bar in 1806. He had been made sheriff of Selkirkshire in 1799, and to the income thus received was added that of a clerk of the Court of Sessions, an office to which he was appointed in 1806. More than this, he had in the preceding year become a partner in the Ballantyne printing establishment, which had moved to Edinburgh, and his growing fame as a writer seemed to promise that his association with this firm would bring considerable profit.

With a good income thus assured, Scott was able within the following four years to produce besides minor works, two other great poems, *Marmion, a Tale of Flodden Field,* and *The Lady of the Lake.* These rank with the most stirring and richly colored narrative poems in our language. So vivid, indeed, are the pictures of Scottish scenery found in *The Lady of the Lake,* that, according to a writer who was living when it was published, "The whole country rang with the praises of the poet—crowds set off to view the scenery of Loch Katrine, till then comparatively unknown; and as the book came out just before the season for excursions, every house and inn in that neighborhood was crammed with a constant succession of visitors."

This lively and pleasing story, with its graceful verse form, has become such a favorite for children's reading, that it seems very amusing to be told of the answer given by one of Scott's little daughters to a family friend who had asked her how she liked the poem: "Oh, I have not read it; papa says there's nothing so bad for young people as reading bad poetry." The biographer Lockhart recounts also a little incident in which young Walter Scott, returning from school with the marks of battle showing plainly on his face, was asked why he had been fighting, and replied, looking down in shame, that he had been called a *lassie.* Never having heard of even the title of his father's poem, the boy had fiercely resented being named, by some of his playmates, *The Lady of the Lake.*

In order to fulfil his duties as sheriff, Scott had in 1804 leased the estate of Ashestiel, and in this wild and beautiful stretch of country on the Tweed

River had spent his summers. When his lease expired in 1811, he bought a farm of one hundred acres extending along the same river, and in the following year removed with his family to the cottage on this new property. This was the simple beginning of the magnificent Abbotsford home. Year after year changes were made, and land was added to the estate until by the close of 1824 a great castle had been erected. The building and furnishing of this mansion were of the keenest interest to its owner, an interest that was expressed probably with most delight in the two wonderful armories containing weapons borne by many heroes of history, and in the library with its carved oak ceiling, its bookcases filled with from fifteen to twenty thousand volumes, among which are some of unusual value, and its handsome portrait of the eldest of Scott's sons.

The building of this splendid dwelling place shows Scott to have been exceptionally prosperous as a writer. Yet his way was by no means always smooth. In 1808 he had formed with the Ballantynes a publishing house that, as a result of poor management, failed completely in 1813. Scott bore the trouble with admirable coolness, and by means of good management averted further disaster and made arrangements for the continued publication of his works.

By this time he had found through the marked success of his novel *Waverley*, published in 1814, that a new and promising field lay before him. He decided then to give up poetry and devote himself especially to writing romances, in which his love of the picturesque and thrilling in history and of the noble and chivalrous in human character could find the widest range of expression. With marvelous industry he added one after another to the long series of his famous Waverley Novels. Perhaps the height of his power was reached in 1819 in the production of *Ivanhoe,* though *Waverley, Guy Mannering* and *The Heart of Midlothian,* previously written, as well as *Kenilworth* and *Quentin Durward,* published later, must also be given first rank. In the intervals of his work on these novels, Scott also wrote reviews and essays and miscellaneous articles. He became recognized as the most gifted prose writer of his age, and his works, it is said, became "the daily food, not only of his countrymen, but of all educated Europe." He was sought after with eager homage by the wealthy and notable, and was given the title of baronet, yet remained as simple and sincere at heart as in the early days of his career.

With the sales of his books amounting to $50,000 or more a year, it is not strange that he should have felt his fortune assured. But again, and this time with the most serious results, he was deceived by the mismanagement of others. The printing firm of James Ballantyne and Company, in which he had remained a partner, became bankrupt in 1826. Had it not been for a high sense of honor, he would have withdrawn with the others of the firm; but the sense of his great debt pressed upon him so sorely that he agreed to pay all that he owed, at whatever cost to himself. For the remaining six years of his life he worked as hard as failing health would allow, and the strain of his labor told on him severely.

At length he consented to a trip to southern Europe, but the change did not bring back his health.

Not long after his return to Abbotsford, in 1832, he called his son-in-law to his bedside early one morning, and speaking in calm tones, said: "Lockhart, I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here." After a few words more he asked God's blessing on all in the household and then fell into a quiet sleep from which he did not awake on earth.

Had Scott lived but a few years longer he would undoubtedly have paid off all his voluntarily assumed obligations. As it was, all his debts were liquidated in 1847 by the sale of copyrights.

Many years have passed since the death of Sir Walter Scott, and to the young readers of to-day the time in which he lived may seem far away and indistinct. But every boy and girl can share with him the pleasure that he felt, all his life, in stories of battle on sea and land, in love tales of knights and ladies, in mysterious superstitions and in everything else that spurs one on at the liveliest speed through the pages of a book. These interests and delights of his boyhood he never outgrew. They kept him always young at heart and gave to his works a freshness and brightness that few writers have been able to retain throughout their lives.

When he became *laird* of Abbotsford, the same sunny nature and kindly feeling for others that had drawn about him many comrades in his schoolboy days, attracted to him crowds of visitors who, though they intruded on his time, were received with generous courtesy. His tall, strongly built figure was often the center of admiring groups of guests who explored with him the wonders and beauties of Abbotsford, listening meanwhile to his humorous stories. At such times, with his clear, wide-open blue eyes, and his pleasant smile lighting his somewhat heavy features, he would have been called a handsome man. Of all who came to the home at Abbotsford, none were more glady received than the children of the tenants who lived in the little homes on the estate. Each year, on the last morning in December, it was customary for them to pay a visit of respect to the *laird,* and though they may not have known it, he found more pleasure in this simple ceremony than in all the others of the Christmas season.

To these gentler qualities of his nature was joined not a little of the hardihood of the Scotch heroes whose lives he has celebrated. The same "high spirit with which, in younger days," he has written, "I used to enjoy a Tam-o'-Shanter ride through darkness, wind and rain, the boughs groaning and cracking over my head, the good horse free to the road and impatient for home, and feeling the weather as little as I did," was that which bore him bravely through misfortune and gave him the splendid courage with which in his last years he faced the ruin of his fortune. With an influence as strong and wholesome as that of his works as a writer, remains the example of his loyal, industrious life.

THE TOURNAMENT

By SIR WALTER SCOTT

NOTE.—Scott's *Ivanhoe,* from which this account of *The Tournament* is taken, belongs to the class of books known as historical novels. Such a book does not necessarily have as the center of its plot an historical incident, nor does it necessarily have an historical character as hero or heroine; it does, however, introduce historic scenes or historic people, or both. In *Ivanhoe,* the events of which take place in England in the twelfth century, during the reign of Richard I, both the king and his brother John appear, though they are by no means the chief characters. The great movements known as the Crusades, while they are frequently mentioned and give a sort of an atmosphere to the book, do not influence the plot directly.

Ivanhoe does much more, however, than introduce us casually to Richard and John; it gives us a striking picture of customs and manners in the twelfth century. The story is not made to halt for long descriptions, but the events themselves and their settings are so brought before us that we have much clearer pictures of them than hours of reading in histories and encyclopedias could give us. This account of a tournament, for instance, while it lets us see all the gorgeousness that was a part of such pageants, does not fail to give us also the cruel, brutal side.

THE poor as well as the rich, the vulgar as well as the noble, in the event of a tournament, which was the grand spectacle of that age, felt as much interested as the half-starved citizen of Madrid, who has not a real left to buy provisions for his family, feels in the issue of a bull-fight. Neither duty nor infirmity could keep youth or age from such exhibitions. The passage of arms, as it was called, which was to take place at Ashby, in the county of Leicester, as champions of the first renown were to take the field in the presence of Prince John himself, who was expected to grace the lists, had attracted universal attention, and an immense confluence of persons of all ranks hastened upon the appointed morning to the place of combat.

The scene was singularly romantic. On the verge of a wood near Ashby, was an extensive meadow of the finest and most beautiful green turf, surrounded on one side by the forest, and fringed on the other by straggling oak trees, some of which had grown to an immense size. The ground, as if fashioned on purpose for the martial display which was intended, sloped gradually down on all sides to a level bottom, which was enclosed for the lists with strong palisades, forming a space of a quarter of a mile in length, and about half as broad. The form of the enclosure was an oblong square, save that the corners were considerably rounded off, in order to afford more convenience for the spectators. The openings for the entry of the combatants were at the northern and southern extremities of the lists, accessible by strong wooden gates, each wide enough to admit two horsemen riding abreast. At each of these portals were stationed two heralds, attended by six trumpets, as many pursuivants,[1] and a strong body of men-at-arms, for maintaining order, and ascertaining the quality of the knights who proposed to engage in this martial game.

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[1] A pursuivant was an attendant on a herald.

On a platform beyond the southern entrance, formed by a natural elevation of the ground, were pitched five magnificent pavilions, adorned with pennons of russet and black, the chosen colors of the five knights challengers. The cords of the tents were of the same color. Before each pavilion was suspended the shield of the knight by whom it was occupied, and beside it stood his squire, quaintly disguised as a salvage[2] or silvan man, or in some other fantastic dress, according to the taste of his master and the character he was pleased to assume during the game. The central pavilion, as the place of honor, had been assigned to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whose renown in all games of chivalry, no less than his connection with the knights who had undertaken this passage of arms, had occasioned him to be eagerly received into the company of challengers, and even adopted as their chief and leader, though he had so recently joined them. On one side of his tent were pitched those of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf and Richard (Philip) de Malvoisin, and on the other was the pavilion of Hugh de Grantmesnil, a noble baron in the vicinity, whose ancestor had been Lord High Steward of England in the time of the Conqueror and his son William Rufus. Ralph de Vipont, a knight of Saint John of Jerusalem, who had some ancient possessions at a place called Heather, near Ashby-de-la-Zouche, occupied the fifth pavilion.

From the entrance into the lists a gently sloping passage, ten yards in breadth, led up to the platform on which the tents were pitched. It was strongly secured by a palisade on each side, as was the esplanade in front of the pavilions, and the whole was guarded by men-at-arms.

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[2] *Salvage* is an old form of the word *savage*.

The northern access to the lists terminated in a similar entrance of thirty feet in breadth, at the extremity of which was a large enclosed space for such knights as might be disposed to enter the lists with the challengers, behind which were placed tents containing refreshments of every kind for their accommodation, with armorers, farriers, and other attendants, in readiness to give their services wherever they might be necessary.

THRONG GOING TO THE LISTS

The exterior of the lists was in part occupied by temporary galleries, spread with tapestries and carpets, and accommodated with cushions for the convenience of those ladies and nobles who were expected to attend the tournament. A narrow space between these galleries and the lists gave accommodation for yeomanry and spectators of a better degree than the mere vulgar, and might be compared to the pit of a theatre. The promiscuous multitude arranged themselves upon large banks of turf prepared for the purpose, which, aided by the natural elevation of the ground, enabled them to overlook the galleries, and obtain a fair view into the lists. Besides the accommodation which these stations afforded, many hundred had perched themselves on the branches of the trees which surrounded the meadow; and even the steeple of a country church, at some distance, was crowded with spectators.

It only remains to notice respecting the general arrangement, that one gallery in the very centre of the eastern side of the lists, and consequently exactly opposite to the spot where the shock of the combat was to take place, was raised higher than the others, more richly decorated, and graced by a sort of throne and canopy, on which the royal arms were emblazoned. Squires, pages, and yeomen in rich liveries waited around this place of honor, which was designed for Prince John and his attendants. Opposite to this royal gallery was another, elevated to the same height, on the western side of the lists; and more gayly, if less sumptuously, decorated than that destined for the Prince himself. A train of pages and of young maidens, the most beautiful who could be selected, gayly dressed in fancy habits of green and pink, surrounded a throne decorated in the same colors. Among pennons and flags, bearing wounded hearts, burning hearts, bleeding hearts, bows and quivers, and all the commonplace emblems of the triumphs of Cupid, a blazoned inscription informed the spectators that this seat of honor was designed for *La Royne de la Beaute et des Amours.* But who was to represent the Queen of Beauty and of Love on the present occasion no one was prepared to guess.

Meanwhile, spectators of every description thronged forward to occupy their respective stations, and not without many quarrels concerning those which they were entitled to hold. Some of these were settled by the men-at-arms with brief ceremony; the shafts of their battle-axes and pummels of their swords being readily employed as arguments to convince the more refractory. Others, which involved the rival claims of more elevated persons, were determined by the heralds, or by the two marshals of the field, William de Wyvil and Stephen de Martival, who, armed at all points, rode up and down the lists to enforce and preserve good order among the spectators.

Gradually the galleries became filled with knights and nobles, in their robes of peace, whose long and rich-tinted mantles were contrasted with the gayer and more splendid habits of the ladies, who, in a greater proportion than even the men themselves, thronged to witness a sport which one would have thought too bloody and dangerous to afford their sex much pleasure. The lower and interior space was soon filled by substantial yeomen and burghers, and such of the lesser gentry as, from modesty, poverty, or dubious title, durst not assume any higher place. It was of course amongst these that the most frequent disputes for precedence occurred.

Suddenly the attention of every one was called to the entrance of Prince John, who at that moment entered the lists, attended by a numerous and gay train, consisting partly of laymen, partly of churchmen, as light in their dress, and as gay in their demeanor, as their companions. Among the latter was the Prior of Jorvaulx, in the most gallant trim which a dignitary of the church could venture to exhibit. Fur and gold were not spared in his garments; and the points of his boots turned up so very far as to be attached not to his knees merely, but to his very girdle, and effectually prevented him from putting his foot into the stirrup. This, however, was a slight inconvenience to the gallant Abbot, who, perhaps even rejoicing in the opportunity to display his accomplished horsemanship before so many spectators, especially of the fair sex, dispensed with the use of these supports to a timid rider. The rest of Prince John's retinue consisted of the favorite leaders of his mercenary troops, some marauding barons and profligate attendants upon the court, with several Knights Templars and Knights of Saint John.

Attended by this gallant equipage, himself well mounted, and splendidly dressed in crimson and in gold, bearing upon his hand a falcon, and having his head covered by a rich fur bonnet, adorned with a circle of precious stones, from which his long curled hair escaped and overspread his shoulders, Prince John, upon a gray and high-mettled palfrey, caracoled within the lists at the head of his jovial party, laughing loud with his train, and eyeing with all the boldness of royal criticism the beauties who adorned the lofty galleries.

In the midst of Prince John's cavalcade, he suddenly stopped, and, appealing to the Prior of Jorvaulx, declared the principal business of the day had been forgotten.

"By my halidom," said he, "we have neglected, Sir Prior, to name the fair Sovereign of Love and of Beauty, by whose white hand the palm is to be distributed. For my part, I am liberal in my ideas, and I care not if I give my vote for the black-eyed Rebecca."

"Holy Virgin," answered the Prior, turning up his eyes in horror, "a Jewess! We should deserve to be stoned out of the lists; and I am not yet old enough to be a martyr. Besides, I swear by my patron saint that she is far inferior to the lovely Saxon, Rowena.

From the tone in which this was spoken, John saw the necessity of acquiescence. "I did but jest," he said; "and you turn upon me like an adder! Name whom you will, in the fiend's name, and please yourselves."

"Nay, nay," said De Bracy, "let the fair sovereign's throne remain unoccupied until the conqueror shall be named, and then let him choose the lady by whom it shall be filled. It will add another grace to his triumph, and teach fair ladies to prize the love of valiant knights, who can exalt them to such distinction."

"If Brian de Bois-Guilbert gain the prize," said the Prior, "I will gage my rosary that I name the Sovereign of Love and Beauty."

"Bois-Guilbert," answered De Bracy, "is a good lance; but there are others around these lists, Sir Prior, who will not fear to encounter him."

"Silence, sirs," said Waldemar, "and let the Prince assume his seat. The knights and spectators are alike impatient, the time advances, and highly fit it is that the sports should commence."

Prince John, though not yet a monarch, had in Waldemar Fitzurse all the inconveniences of a favorite minister, who, in serving his sovereign, must always do so in his own way. The Prince acquiesced, however, although his disposition was precisely of that kind which is apt to be obstinate upon trifles, and, assuming his throne, and being surrounded by his followers, gave signal to the heralds to proclaim the laws of the tournament, which were briefly as follows:

First, the five challengers were to undertake all comers.

Secondly, any knight proposing to combat might, if he pleased, select a special antagonist from among the challengers, by touching his shield. If he did so with the reverse of his lance, the trial of skill was made with what were called the arms of courtesy, that is, with lances at whose extremity a piece of round flat board was fixed, so that no danger was encountered, save from the shock of the horses and riders. But if the shield was touched with the sharp end of the lance, the combat was understood to be at *outrance*,[3] that is, the knights were to fight with sharp weapons, as in actual battle.

Thirdly, when the knights present had accomplished their vow, by each of them breaking five lances, the Prince was to declare the victor in the first day's tourney, who should receive as prize a war-horse of exquisite beauty and matchless

[3] *Outrance* is an old word meaning *the last extremity*.

strength; and in addition to this reward of valor, it was now declared, he should have the peculiar honor of naming the Queen of Love and Beauty, by whom the prize should be given on the ensuing day.

Fourthly, it was announced that, on the second day, there should be a general tournament, in which all the knights present, who were desirous to win praise, might take part; and being divided into two bands, of equal numbers, might fight it out manfully until the signal was given by Prince John to cease the combat. The elected Queen of Love and Beauty was then to crown the knight, whom the Prince should adjudge to have borne himself best in this second day, with a coronet composed of thin gold plate, cut into the shape of a laurel crown. On this second day the knightly games ceased. But on that which was to follow, feats of archery, of bull-baiting, and other popular amusements were to be practiced, for the more immediate amusement of the populace. In this manner did Prince John endeavor to lay the foundation of a popularity which he was perpetually throwing down by some inconsiderate act of wanton aggression upon the feelings and prejudices of the people.

The lists now presented a most splendid spectacle. The sloping galleries were crowded with all that was noble, great, wealthy, and beautiful in the northern and midland parts of England; and the contrast of the various dresses of these dignified spectators rendered the view as gay as it was rich, while the interior and lower space, filled with the substantial burgesses and yeomen of merry England, formed, in their more plain attire, a dark fringe, or border, around this circle of brilliant embroidery, relieving, and at the same time setting off, its splendor.

The heralds finished their proclamation with their usual cry of "Largesse,[4] largesse, gallant knights!" and gold and silver pieces were showered on them from the galleries, it being a high point of chivalry to exhibit liberality toward those whom the age accounted at once the secretaries and historians of honor. The bounty of the spectators was acknowledged by the customary shouts of "Love of ladies—Death of champions—Honor to the generous—Glory to the brave!" To which the more humble spectators added their acclamations, and a numerous band of trumpeters the flourish of their martial instruments. When these sounds had ceased, the heralds withdrew from the lists in gay and glittering procession, and none remained within them save the marshals of the field, who, armed cap-à-pie, sat on horseback, motionless as statues, at the opposite ends of the lists. Meantime, the inclosed space at the northern extremity of the lists, large as it was, was now completely crowded with knights desirous to prove their skill against the challengers, and, when viewed from the galleries, presented the appearance of a sea of waving plumage, intermixed with glistening helmets and tall lances, to the extremities of which were, in many cases, attached small pennons of about a span's breadth, which, fluttering in the air as the breeze caught them, joined with the restless motion of the feathers to add liveliness to the scene.

At length the barriers were opened, and five knights, chosen by lot, advanced slowly into the area; a single champion riding in front, and the other four following in pairs. All were splendidly armed, and my Saxon authority (in the Wardour Manuscript) records at great length their devices, their colors, and the embroidery of their horse trappings. It is unnecessary to be particular on these subjects.

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[4] A largesse is a gift or donation.

Their escutcheons have long mouldered from the walls of their castles. Their castles themselves are but green mounds and shattered ruins: the place that once knew them, knows them no more—nay, many a race since theirs has died out and been forgotten in the very land which they occupied with all the authority of feudal proprietors and feudal lords. What, then, would it avail the reader to know their names, or the evanescent symbols of their martial rank?

Now, however, no whit anticipating the oblivion which awaited their names and feats, the champions advanced through the lists, restraining their fiery steeds, and compelling them to move slowly, while, at the same time, they exhibited their paces, together with the grace and dexterity of the riders. As the procession entered the lists, the sound of a wild barbaric music was heard from behind the tents of the challengers, where the performers were concealed. It was of Eastern origin, having been brought from the Holy Land; and the mixture of the cymbals and bells seemed to bid welcome at once, and defiance, to the knights as they advanced. With the eyes of an immense concourse of spectators fixed upon them, the five Knights advanced up the platform upon which the tents of the challengers stood, and there separating themselves, each touched slightly, and with the reverse of his lance, the shield of the antagonist to whom he wished to oppose himself. The lower order of spectators in general—nay, many of the higher class, and it is even said several of the ladies—were rather disappointed at the champions choosing the arms of courtesy. For the same sort of persons who, in the present day, applaud most highly the deepest tragedies were then interested in a tournament exactly in proportion to the danger incurred by the champions engaged.

Having intimated their more pacific purpose, the champions retreated to the extremity of the lists, where they remained drawn up in a line; while the challengers, sallying each from his pavilion, mounted their horses, and, headed by Brian de Bois-Guilbert, descended from the platform and opposed themselves individually to the knights who had touched their respective shields.

At the flourish of clarions and trumpets, they started out against each other at full gallop; and such was the superior dexterity or good fortune of the challengers, that those opposed to Bois-Guilbert, Malvoisin, and Front-de-Bœuf rolled on the ground. The antagonist of Grantmesnil, instead of bearing his lance-point fair against the crest or the shield of his enemy, swerved so much from the direct line as to break the weapon athwart the person of his opponent—a circumstance which was accounted more disgraceful than that of being actually unhorsed, because the latter might happen from accident, whereas the former evinced awkwardness and want of management of the weapon and of the horse. The fifth knight alone maintained the honor of his party, and parted fairly with the Knight of Saint John, both splintering their lances without advantage on either side.

The shouts of the multitude, together with the acclamations of the heralds and the clangor of the trumpets, announced the triumph of the victors and the defeat of the vanquished. The former retreated to their pavilions, and the latter, gathering themselves up as they could, withdrew from the lists in disgrace and dejection, to agree with their victors concerning the redemption of their arms and their horses, which, according to the laws of the tournament, they had forfeited. The fifth of their number alone tarried in the lists long enough to be greeted by the applauses of the spectators, among whom he retreated, to the aggravation, doubtless, of his companions' mortification.

A second and a third party of knights took the field; and although they had various success, yet, upon the whole, the advantage decidedly remained with the challengers, not one of them whom lost his seat or swerved from his charge—misfortunes which befell one or two of their antagonists in each encounter. The spirits, therefore, of those opposed to them seemed to be considerably damped by their continued success. Three knights only appeared on the fourth entry, who, avoiding the shields of Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Bœuf, contented themselves with touching those of the three other knights who had not altogether manifested the same strength and dexterity. This politic selection did not alter the fortune of the field: the challengers were still successful. One of their antagonists was overthrown; and both the others failed in the *attaint*, that is, in striking the helmet and shield of their antagonist firmly and strongly, with the lance held in a direct line, so that the weapon might break unless the champion was overthrown.

After this fourth encounter, there was a considerable pause; nor did it appear that any one was very desirous of renewing the contest. The spectators murmured among themselves; for, among the challengers, Malvoisin and Front-de-Bœuf were unpopular from their characters, and the others, except Grantmesnil, were disliked as strangers and foreigners.

But none shared the general feeling of dissatisfaction so keenly as Cedric the Saxon, who saw, in each advantage gained by the Norman challengers, a repeated triumph over the honor of England. His own education had taught him no skill in the games of chivalry, although, with the arms of his Saxon ancestors, he had manifested himself, on many occasions, a brave and determined soldier.

He looked anxiously to Athelstane, who had learned the accomplishments of the age, as if desiring that he should make some personal effort to recover the victory which was passing into the hands of the Templar and his associates. But, though both stout of heart and strong of person, Athelstane had a disposition too inert and unambitious to make the exertions which Cedric seemed to expect from him.

"The day is against England, my lord," said Cedric, in a marked tone; "are you not tempted to take the lance?"

"I shall tilt to-morrow," answered Athelstane, "in the *mêlée;* it is not worth while for me to arm myself to-day."

Two things displeased Cedric in this speech. It contained the Norman word *mêlée* (to express the general conflict), and it evinced some indifference to the honor of the country; but it was spoken by Athelstane, whom he held in such profound respect that he would not trust himself to canvass his motives or his foibles. Moreover, he had no time to make any remark, for Wamba thrust in his word, observing, "It was better, though scarce easier, to be the best man among a hundred than the best man of two."

Athelstane took the observation as a serious compliment; but Cedric, who better understood the Jester's meaning, darted at him a severe and menacing look; and lucky it was for Wamba, perhaps, that the time and place prevented his receiving, notwithstanding his place and service, more sensible marks of his master's resentment.

The pause in the tournament was still uninterrupted, excepting by the voices of the heralds exclaiming—"Love of ladies, splintering of lances! stand forth, gallant knights, fair eyes look upon your deeds!"

The music also of the challengers breathed from time to time wild bursts expressive of triumph or defiance, while the clowns[5] grudged a holiday which seemed to pass away in inactivity; and old knights and nobles lamented in whispers the decay of martial spirit, spoke of the triumphs of their younger days, but agreed that the land did not now supply dames of such transcendent beauty as had animated the jousts of former times. Prince John began to talk to his attendants about making ready the banquet, and the necessity of adjudging the prize to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who had, with a single spear, overthrown two knights and foiled a third.

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[5] *Clowns* here means *peasants.*

At length, as the Saracenic music of the challengers concluded one of those long and high flourishes with which they had broken the silence of the lists, it was answered by a solitary trumpet, which breathed a note of defiance from the northern extremity. All eyes were turned to see the new champion which these sounds announced, and no sooner were the barriers opened than he paced into the lists. As far as could be judged of a man sheathed in armor, the new adventurer did not greatly exceed the middle size, and seemed to be rather slender than strongly made. His suit of armor was formed of steel, richly inlaid with gold, and the device on his shield was a young oak-tree pulled up by the roots, with the Spanish word *Desdichado,* signifying Disinherited. He was mounted on a gallant black horse, and as he passed through the lists he gracefully saluted the Prince and the ladies by lowering his lance. The dexterity with which he managed his steed, and something of youthful grace which he displayed in his manner, won him the favor of the multitude, which some of the lower classes observed by calling out, "Touch Ralph de Vipont's shield—touch the Hospitaller's shield; he has the least sure seat, he is your cheapest bargain."

The champion, moving onward amid these well-meant hints, ascended the platform by the sloping alley which led to it from the lists, and, to the astonishment of all present, riding straight up to the central pavilion, struck with the sharp end of his spear the shield of Brian de Bois-Guilbert until it rang again. All stood astonished at his presumption, but none more than the redoubted Knight whom he had thus defied to mortal combat, and who, little expecting so rude a challenge, was standing carelessly at the door of the pavilion.

"Have you confessed yourself, brother," said the Templar, "and have you heard mass this morning, that you peril your life so frankly?"

"I am fitter to meet death than thou art," answered the Disinherited Knight; for by this name the stranger had recorded himself in the books of the tourney.

"Then take your place in the lists," said Bois-Guilbert, "and look your last upon the sun; for this night thou shalt sleep in paradise."

"Gramercy for thy courtesy," replied the Disinherited Knight, "and to requite it, I advise thee to take a fresh horse and a new lance, for by my honor you will need both."

Having expressed himself thus confidently, he reined his horse backward down the slope which he had ascended, and compelled him in the same manner to move backward through the lists, till he reached the northern extremity, where he remained stationary, in expectation of his antagonist. This feat of horsemanship again attracted the applause of the multitude.

However incensed at his adversary for the precautions he recommended, Brian de Bois-Guilbert did not neglect his advice; for his honor was too nearly concerned to permit his neglecting any means which might insure victory over his presumptuous opponent. He changed his horse for a proved and fresh one of great strength and spirit. He chose a new and tough spear, lest the wood of the former might have been strained in the previous encounters he had sustained. Lastly he laid aside his shield, which had received some little damage, and received another from his squires. His first had only borne the general device of his order, representing two knights riding upon one horse, an emblem expressive of the original humility and poverty of the Templars, qualities which they had since exchanged for the arrogance and wealth that finally occasioned their suppression. Bois-Guilbert's new shield bore a raven in full flight, holding in its claws a skull, and bearing the motto, *Gare le Corbeau.*[6]

When the two champions stood opposed to each other at the two extremities of the lists, the public expectation was strained to the highest pitch. Few augured the possibility that the encounter could terminate well for the Disinherited Knight; yet his courage and gallantry secured the general good wishes of the spectators.

The trumpets had no sooner given the signal, than the champions vanished from their posts with the speed of lightning, and closed in the centre of the lists with the shock of a thunderbolt. The lances burst into shivers up to the very grasp, and it seemed at the moment that both knights had fallen, for the shock had made each horse recoil backward upon its haunches. The address of the riders recovered their steeds by use of the bridle and spur; and having glared on each other for an instant with eyes which seemed to flash fire through the bars of their

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6. *Gare le Corbeau* means *Beware of the raven.*

visors, each made a demi-volte,[7] and, retiring to the extremity of the lists, received a fresh lance from the attendants.

A loud shout from the spectators, waving of scarfs and handkerchiefs, and general acclamations, attested the interest taken by the spectators in this encounter—the most equal, as well as the best performed, which had graced the day. But no sooner had the knights resumed their station than the clamor of applause was hushed into a silence so deep and so dead that it seemed the multitude were afraid even to breathe.

A few minutes' pause having been allowed, that the combatants and their horses might recover breath, Prince John with his truncheon signed to the trumpets to sound the onset. The champions a second time sprung from their stations, and closed in the centre of the lists, with the same speed, the same dexterity, the same violence, but not the same equal fortune as before.

In this second encounter, the Templar aimed at the centre of his antagonist's shield, and struck it so fair and forcibly that his spear went to shivers, and the Disinherited Knight reeled in his saddle. On the other hand, that champion had, at the beginning of his career, directed the point of his lance toward Bois-Guilbert's shield, but, changing his aim almost in the moment of encounter, he addressed it to the helmet, a mark more difficult to hit, but which, if attained, rendered the shock more irresistible. Fair and true he hit the Norman on the visor, where his lance's point kept hold of the bars. Yet, even at this disadvantage, the Templar sustained his high reputation; and had not the girths of his saddle burst, he might not have been unhorsed. As it chanced, however, saddle, horse, and man rolled on the ground under a cloud of dust.

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[7] A demi-volte is a certain movement of a horse, by which he makes a half turn with the fore-feet off the ground.

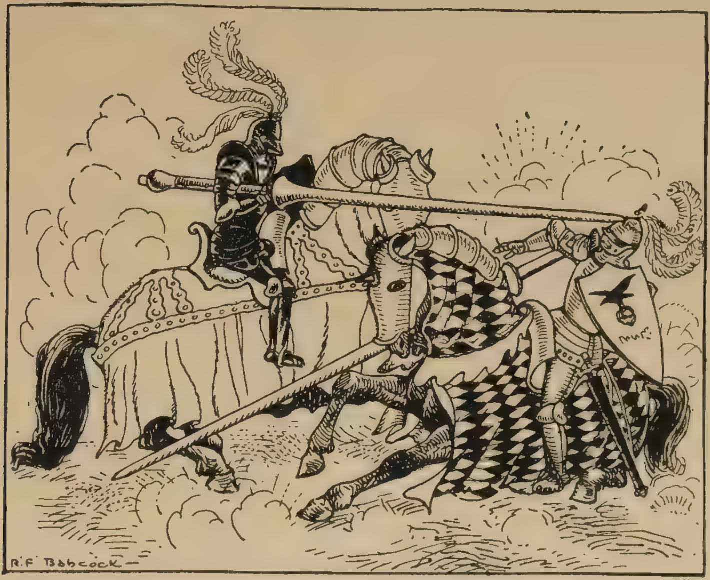
To extricate himself from the stirrups and fallen steed was to the Templar scarce the work of a moment; and, stung with madness, both at his disgrace and at the acclamations with which it was hailed by the spectators, he drew his sword and waved it in defiance of his conqueror. The Disinherited Knight sprung from his steed, and also unsheathed his sword. The marshals of the field, however, spurred their horses between them, and reminded them that the laws of the tournament did not, on the present occasion, permit this species of encounter.

"We shall meet again, I trust," said the Templar, casting a resentful glance at his antagonist; "and where there are none to separate us."

"If we do not," said the Disinherited Knight, "the fault shall not be mine. On foot or horseback, with spear, with axe, or with sword, I am alike ready to encounter thee."

More and angrier words would have been exchanged, but the marshals, crossing their lances between them, compelled them to separate. The Disinherited Knight returned to his first station, and Bois-Guilbert to his tent, where he remained for the rest of the day in an agony of despair.

Without alighting from his horse, the conqueror called for a bowl of wine, and opening the beaver, or lower part of his helmet, announced that he quaffed it, "To all true English hearts, and to the confusion of foreign tyrants." He then commanded his trumpet to sound a defiance to the challengers, and desired a herald to announce to them that he should make no election, but was willing to encounter them in the order in which they pleased to advance against him.



DISINHERITED KNIGHT UNHORSES BRIAN

The gigantic Front-de-Bœuf, armed in sable armor, was the first who took the field. He bore on a white shield a black bull's head,[8] half defaced by the numerous encounters which he had undergone, and bearing the arrogant motto, *Cave, Adsum.*[9] Over this champion the Disinherited Knight obtained a slight but decisive advantage. Both knights broke their lances fairly, but Front-de-Bœuf, who lost a stirrup in the encounter, was adjudged to have the disadvantage.

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[8] *Front-de-Boeuf* means bull's head.

[9] *Cave, Adsum* is a Latin expression meaning *Beware, I am here.*

In the stranger's third encounter, with Sir Philip Malvoisin, he was equally successful; striking that baron so forcibly on the casque that the laces of the helmet broke, and Malvoisin, only saved from falling by being unhelmeted, was declared vanquished like his companions.

In his fourth combat, with De Grantmesnil, the Disinherited Knight showed as much courtesy as he had hitherto evinced courage and dexterity. De Grantmesnil's horse, which was young and violent, reared and plunged in the course of the career so as to disturb the rider's aim, and the stranger, declining to take the advantage which this accident afforded him, raised his lance, and passing his antagonist without touching him, wheeled his horse and rode back again to his own end of the lists, offering his antagonist, by a herald, the chance of a second encounter. This De Grantmesnil declined, avow- himself vanquished as much by the courtesy as by the address of his opponent.

Ralph de Vipont summed up the list of the stranger's triumphs, being hurled to the ground with such force that the blood gushed from his nose and his mouth, and he was borne senseless from the lists.

The acclamations of thousands applauded the unanimous award of the Prince and marshals, announcing that day's honors to the Disinherited Knight.

William de Wyvil and Stephen de Martival, the marshals of the field, were the first to offer their congratulations to the victor, praying him, at the same time, to suffer his helmet to be unlaced, or, at least, that he would raise his visor ere they conducted him to receive the prize of the day's tourney from the hands of Prince John. The Disinherited Knight, with all knightly courtesy, declined their request, alleging, that he could not at this time suffer his face to be seen, for reasons which he had assigned to the heralds when he entered the lists. The marshals were perfectly satisfied by this reply; for amid the frequent and capricious vows by which knights were accustomed to bind themselves in the days of chivalry, there were none more common than those by which they engaged to remain incognito for a certain space, or until some particular adventure was achieved. The marshals, therefore, pressed no further into the mystery of the Disinherited Knight, but, announcing to Prince John the conqueror's desire to remain unknown, they requested permission to bring him before his Grace, in order that he might receive the reward of his valor.

John's curiosity was excited by the mystery observed by the stranger; and, being already displeased with the issue of the tournament, in which the challengers whom he favored had been successively defeated by one knight, he answered haughtily to the marshals, "By the light of Our Lady's brow, this same knight hath been disinherited as well of his courtesy as of his lands, since he desires to appear before us without uncovering his face. Wot ye, my lords," he said, turning round to his train, "who this gallant can be that bears himself thus proudly?"

"I cannot guess," answered De Bracy, "nor did I think there had been within the four seas that girth Britain a champion that could bear down these five knights in one day's jousting. By my faith, I shall never forget the force with which he shocked De Vipont. The poor Hospitaller[10] was hurled from his saddle like a stone from a sling."

"Boast not of that," said a Knight of Saint John, who was present; "your Temple champion had no better luck. I saw your brave lance, Bois-Guilbert, roll thrice over, grasping his hands full of sand at every turn."

De Bracy, being attached to the Templars, would have replied, but was prevented by Prince John. "Silence, sirs!" he said; "what unprofitable debate have we here?"

"The victor," said De Wyvil, "still waits the pleasure of your Highness."

"It is our pleasure," answered John, "that he do so wait until we learn whether there is not some one who can at least guess at his name and quality. Should he remain there till nightfall, he has had work enough to keep him warm."

"Your Grace," said Waldemar Fitzurse, "will do less than due honor to the victor if you compel him to wait till we tell your Highness that which we cannot know; at least I can form no guess—unless he be one of the good lances who accompanied King Richard to Palestine, and who are now straggling homeward from the Holy Land."

While he was yet speaking, the marshals brought forward the Disinherited Knight to the foot of a wooden flight of steps, which formed the ascent from the lists to Prince John's throne. With a short and embarrassed eulogy upon his valor, the Prince caused to be delivered to him the war-horse assigned as the prize.

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[10] *Hospitallers* was another name for the Knights of Saint John.

But the Disinherited Knight spoke not a word in reply to the compliment of the Prince, which he only acknowledged with a profound obeisance.

The horse was led into the lists by two grooms richly dressed, the animal itself being fully accoutred with the richest war-furniture; which, however, scarcely added to the value of the noble creature in the eyes of those who were judges. Laying one hand upon the pommel of the saddle, the Disinherited Knight vaulted at once upon the back of the steed without making use of the stirrup, and, brandishing aloft his lance, rode twice around the lists, exhibiting the points and paces of the horse with the skill of a perfect horseman.

The appearance of vanity which might otherwise have been attributed to this display was removed by the propriety shown in exhibiting to the best advantage the princely reward with which he had been just honored, and the Knight was again greeted by the acclamation of all present.

In the meanwhile, the bustling Prior of Jorvaulx had reminded Prince John, in a whisper, that the victor must now display his good judgment, instead of his valor, by selecting from among the beauties who graced the galleries a lady who should fill the throne of the Queen of Beauty and of Love, and deliver the prize of the tourney, upon the ensuing day. The Prince accordingly made a sign with his truncheon as the Knight passed him in his second career around the lists. The Knight turned toward the throne, and, sinking his lance until the point was within a foot of the ground, remained motionless, as if expecting John's commands; while all admired the sudden dexterity with which he instantly reduced his fiery steed from a state of violent emotion and high excitation to the stillness of an equestrian statue.

"Sir Disinherited Knight," said Prince John, "since that is the only title by which we can address you, it is now your duty, as well as privilege, to name the fair lady who, as Queen of Honor and of Love, is to preside over next day's festival. If, as a stranger in our land, you should require the aid of other judgment to guide your own we can only say that Alicia, the daughter of our gallant knight Waldemar Fitzurse, has at our court been long held the first in beauty as in place. Nevertheless, it is your undoubted prerogative to confer on whom you please this crown, by the delivery of which to the lady of your choice the election of to-morrow's Queen will be formal and complete. Raise your lance."

The Knight obeyed; and Prince John placed upon its point a coronet of green satin, having around its edge a circlet of gold, the upper edge of which was relieved by arrow-points and hearts placed interchangeably, like the strawberry leaves and balls upon a ducal crown.

In the broad hint which he dropped respecting the daughter of Waldemar Fitzurse, John had more than one motive, each the offspring of a mind which was a strange mixture of carelessness and presumption with low artifice and cunning. He was desirous of conciliating Alicia's father, Waldemar, of whom he stood in awe, and who had more than once shown himself dissatisfied during the course of the day's proceedings; he had also a wish to establish himself in the good graces of the lady. But besides all these reasons, he was desirous to raise up against the Disinherited Knight, toward whom he already entertained a strong dislike, a powerful enemy in the person of Waldemar Fitzurse, who was likely, he thought, highly to resent the injury done to his daughter in case, as was not unlikely, the victor should make another choice.

And so indeed it proved. For the Disinherited Knight passed the gallery, close to that of the Prince, in which the Lady Alicia was seated in the full pride of triumphant beauty, and pacing forward as slowly as he had hitherto rode swiftly around the lists, he seemed to exercise his right of examining the numerous fair faces which adorned that splendid circle.

It was worth while to see the different conduct of the beauties who underwent this examination, during the time it was proceeding. Some blushed; some assumed an air of pride and dignity; some looked straight forward, and essayed to seem utterly unconscious of what was going on; some drew back in alarm, which was perhaps affected; some endeavored to forbear smiling; and there were two or three who laughed outright. There were also some who dropped their veils over their charms; but as the Wardour Manuscript says these were fair ones of ten years' standing, it may be supposed that, having had their full share of such vanities, they were willing to withdraw their claim in order to give a fair chance to the rising beauties of the age.

At length the champion paused beneath the balcony in which the Lady Rowena was placed, and the expectation of the spectators was excited to the utmost.

It must be owned that, if an interest displayed in his success could have bribed the Disinherited Knight, the part of the lists before which he paused had merited his predilection. Cedric the Saxon, overjoyed at the discomfiture of the Templar, and still more so at the miscarriage of his two malevolent neighbors, Front-de-Bœuf and Malvoisin, had accompanied the victor in each course not with his eyes only, but with his whole heart and soul. The Lady Rowena had watched the progress of the day with equal attention, though without openly betraying the same intense interest. Even the unmoved Athelstane had shown symptoms of shaking off his apathy, when, calling for a huge goblet of muscadine, he quaffed it to the health of the Disinherited Knight.

Whether from indecision or some other motive of hesitation, the champion of the day remained stationary for more than a minute, while the eyes of the silent audience were riveted upon his motions; and then, gradually and gracefully sinking the point of his lance, he deposited the coronet which it supported at the feet of the fair Rowena. The trumpets instantly sounded, while the heralds proclaimed the Lady Rowena the Queen of Beauty and of Love for the ensuing day, menacing with suitable penalties those who should be disobedient to her authority. They then repeated their cry of "Largesse," to which Cedric, in the height of his joy, replied by an ample donative, and to which Athelstane, though less promptly, added one equally large.

There was some murmuring among the damsels of Norman descent, who were as much unused to see the preference given to a Saxon beauty as the Norman nobles were to sustain defeat in the games of chivalry which they themselves had introduced. But these sounds of disaffection were drowned by the popular shout of "Long live the Lady Rowena, the chosen and lawful Queen of Love and of Beauty!" To which many in the lower area added, "Long live the Saxon Princess! long live the race of the immortal Alfred!"

However unacceptable these sounds might be to Prince John and to those around him, he saw himself nevertheless obliged to confirm the nomination of the victor, and accordingly calling to horse, he left his throne, and mounting his jennet, accompanied by his train, he again entered the lists.

Spurring his horse, as if to give vent to his vexation, he made the animal bound forward to the gallery where Rowena was seated, with the crown still at her feet.

"Assume," he said, "fair lady, the mark of your sovereignty, to which none vows homage more sincerely than ourself, John of Anjou; and if it please you to-day, with your noble sire and friends, to grace our banquet in the Castle of Ashby, we shall learn to know the empress to whose service we devote to-morrow."

Rowena remained silent, and Cedric answered for her in his native Saxon.

"The Lady Rowena," he said, "possesses not the language in which to reply to your courtesy, or to sustain her part in your festival. I also, and the noble Athelstane of Coningsburgh, speak only the language and practice only the manners, of our fathers. We therefore decline with thanks your Highness's courteous invitation to the banquet. To-morrow, the Lady Rowena will take upon her the state to which she has been called by the free election of the victor Knight, confirmed by the acclamations of the people."

So saying, he lifted the coronet and placed it upon Rowena's head, in token of her acceptance of the temporary authority assigned to her.

In various routes, according to the different quarters from which they came, and in groups of various numbers, the spectators were seen retiring over the plain. By far the most numerous part streamed toward the town of Ashby, where many of the distinguished persons were lodged in the castle, and where others found accommodation in the town itself. Among these were most of the knights who had already appeared in the tournament, or who proposed to fight there the ensuing day, and who, as they rode slowly along, talking over the events of the day, were greeted with loud shouts by the populace. The same acclamations were bestowed upon Prince John, although he was indebted for them rather to the splendor of his appearance and train than to the popularity of his character.

A more sincere and more general, as well as a better merited acclamation, attended the victor of the day, until, anxious to withdraw himself from popular notice, he accepted the accommodation of one of those pavilions pitched at the extremities of the lists, the use of which was courteously tendered him by the marshals of the field. On his retiring to his tent, many who had lingered in the lists, to look upon and form conjectures concerning him, also dispersed.

The signs and sounds of a tumultuous concourse of men lately crowded together in one place, and agitated by the same passing events, were now exchanged for the distant hum of voices of different groups retreating in all directions, and these speedily died away in silence. No other sounds were heard save the voices of the menials who stripped the galleries of their cushions and tapestry, in order to put them in safety for the night, and wrangled among themselves for half-used bottles of wine and relics of the refreshments which had been served round to the spectators.

THE ARMOUR MAKERS

Beyond the precincts of the lists more than one forge was erected; and these now began to glimmer through the twilight, announcing the toil of the armorers, which was to continue through the whole night, in order to repair or alter the suits of armor to be used again on the morrow.

A strong guard of men-at-arms, renewed at intervals, from two hours to two hours, surrounded the lists, and kept watch during the night.

The Disinherited Knight had no sooner reached his pavilion than squires and pages in abundance tendered their services to disarm him, to bring fresh attire, and to offer him the refreshment of the bath. Their zeal on this occasion was perhaps sharpened by curiosity, since every one desired to know who the knight was that had gained so many laurels, yet had refused, even at the command of Prince John, to lift his visor or to name his name. But their officious inquisitiveness was not gratified. The Disinherited Knight refused all other assistance save that of his own squire, or rather yeoman—a clownish-looking man, who, wrapped in a cloak of dark-colored felt, and having his head and face half buried in a Norman bonnet made of black fur, seemed to affect the incognito as much as his master. All others being excluded from the tent, this attendant relieved his master from the more burdensome parts of his armor, and placed food and wine before him, which the exertions of the body rendered very acceptable.

The Knight had scarcely finished a hasty meal ere his menial announced to him that five men, each leading a barbed steed,[11] desired to speak with him. The Disinherited Knight had exchanged his armor for the long robe usually worn by those of his condition, which, being furnished with a hood, concealed the features, when such was the pleasure of the wearer, almost as completely as the visor of the helmet itself; but the twilight, which was now fast darkening, would of itself have rendered a disguise unnecessary, unless to persons to whom the face of an individual chanced to be particularly well known.

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[11] *Barbed*, or *barded*, is a term used of a war-horse, and means *furnished with armor.*

The Disinherited Knight, therefore, stepped boldly forth to the front of his tent, and found in attendance the squires of the challengers, whom he easily knew by their russet and black dresses, each of whom led his master's charger, loaded with the armor in which he had that day fought.

"According to the laws of chivalry," said the foremost of these men, "I, Baldwin de Oyley, squire to the redoubted Knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, make offer to you, styling yourself for the present the Disinherited Knight, of the horse and armor used by the said Brian de Bois-Guilbert in this day's passage of arms, leaving it with your nobleness to retain or to ransom the same, according to your pleasure; for such is the law of arms."

The other squires repeated nearly the same formula, and then stood to await the decision of the Disinherited Knight.

"To you four, sirs," replied the Knight, addressing those who had last spoken, "and to your honorable and valiant masters, I have one common reply. Commend me to the noble knights, your masters, and say, I should do ill to deprive them of steeds and arms which can never be used by braver cavaliers. I would I could here end my message to these gallant knights; but being, as I term myself, in truth and earnest, the Disinherited, I must be thus far bound to your masters, that they will, of their courtesy, be pleased to ransom their steeds and armor, since that which I wear I can hardly term mine own."

"We stand commissioned, each of us," answered the squire of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, "to offer a hundred zecchins[12] in ransom of these horses and suits of armor."

"It is sufficient," said the Disinherited Knight. "Half the sum my present necessities compel me to accept; of the remaining half, distribute one moiety among yourselves, sir squires, and divide the other half between the heralds and the pursuivants, and minstrels, and attendants."

The squires, with cap in hand, and low reverences, expressed their deep sense of a courtesy and generosity not often practiced, at least upon a scale so extensive.

The Disinherited Knight then addressed his discourse to Baldwin, the squire of Brian de Bois-Guilbert. "From your master," said he, "I will accept neither arms nor ransom. Say to him in my name, that our strife is not ended—no, not till we have fought as well with swords as with lances, as well on foot as on horseback. To this mortal quarrel he has himself defied me, and I shall not forget the challenge. Meantime, let him be assured that I hold him not as one of his companions, with whom I can with pleasure exchange courtesies; but rather as one with whom I stand upon terms of mortal defiance."

"My master," answered Baldwin, "knows how to requite scorn with scorn, and blows with blows, as well as courtesy with courtesy. Since you disdain to accept from him any share of the ransom at which you have rated the arms of the other knights, I must leave his armor and his horse here, being well assured that he will never deign to mount the one nor wear the other."

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[12] A zecchin, or sequin, is worth about $2.25.

"You have spoken well, good squire," said the Disinherited Knight—"well and boldly, as it beseemeth him to speak who answers for an absent master. Leave not, however, the horse and armor here. Restore them to thy master; or, if he scorns to accept them, retain them, good friend, for thine own use. So far as they are mine, I bestow them upon you freely."

Baldwin made a deep obeisance, and retired with his companions; and the Disinherited Knight entered the pavilion.

Morning arose in unclouded splendor, and ere the sun was much above the horizon the idlest or the most eager of the spectators appeared on the common, moving to the lists as to a general centre, in order to secure a favorable situation for viewing the continuation of the expected games.

The marshals and their attendants appeared next on the field, together with the heralds, for the purpose of receiving the names of the knights who intended to joust, with the side which each chose to espouse. This was a necessary precaution in order to secure equality between the two bodies who should be opposed to each other.

According to due formality, the Disinherited Knight was to be considered as leader of the one body, while Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who had been rated as having done second-best in the preceding day, was named first champion of the other band. Those who had concurred in the challenge adhered to his party, of course, excepting only Ralph de Vipont, whom his fall had rendered unfit so soon to put on his armor. There was no want of distinguished candidates to fill up the ranks on either side.

In fact, although the general tournament, in which all knights fought at once, was more dangerous than single encounters, they were, nevertheless, more frequented and practiced by the chivalry of the age. Many knights, who had not sufficient confidence in their own skill to defy a single adversary of high reputation, were, nevertheless, desirous of displaying their valor in the general combat, where they might meet others with whom they were more upon an equality.

On the present occasion, about fifty knights were inscribed as desirous of combating upon each side, when the marshals declared that no more could be admitted, to the disappointment of several who were too late in preferring their claim to be included.

About the hour of ten o'clock the whole plain was crowded with horsemen, horsewomen, and foot-passengers, hastening to the tournament; and shortly after, a grand flourish of trumpets announced Prince John and his retinue, attended by many of those knights who meant to take share in the game, as well as others who had no such intention.

About the same time arrived Cedric the Saxon, with the Lady Rowena, unattended, however, by Athelstane. This Saxon lord had arrayed his tall and strong person in armor, in order to take his place among the combatants; and, considerably to the surprise of Cedric, had chosen to enlist himself on the part of the Knight Templar. The Saxon, indeed, had remonstrated strongly with his friend upon the injudicious choice he had made of his party; but he had only received that sort of answer usually given by those who are more obstinate in following their own course than strong in justifying it.

His best, if not his only, reason for adhering to the party of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, Athelstane had the prudence to keep to himself. Though his apathy of disposition prevented his taking any means to recommend himself to the Lady Rowena, he was, nevertheless, by no means insensible to her charms, and considered his union with her as a matter already fixed beyond doubt by the assent of Cedric and her other friends. It had, therefore, been with smothered displeasure that the proud though indolent Lord of Coningsburgh beheld the victor of the preceding day select Rowena as the object of that honor which it became his privilege to confer. In order to punish him for a preference which seemed to interfere with his own suit, Athelstane, confident of his strength, and to whom his flatterers, at least, ascribed great skill in arms, had determined not only to deprive the Disinherited Knight of his powerful succor, but, if an opportunity should occur, to make him feel the weight of his battle-axe.

De Bracy, and other knights attached to Prince John, in obedience to a hint from him, had joined the party of the challengers, John being desirous to secure, if possible, the victory to that side. On the other hand, many other knights, both English and Norman, natives and strangers, took part against the challengers, the more readily that the opposite band was to be led by so distinguished a champion as the Disinherited Knight had approved himself.

As soon as Prince John observed that the destined Queen of the day arrived upon the field, assuming that air of courtesy which sat well upon him when he was pleased to exhibit it, he rode forward to meet her, doffed his bonnet, and, alighting from his horse, assisted the Lady Rowena from her saddle, while his followers uncovered at the same time, and one of the most distinguished dismounted to hold her palfrey.

"It is thus," said Prince John, "that we set the dutiful example of loyalty to the Queen of Love and Beauty, and are ourselves her guide to the throne which she must this day occupy. "Ladies," he said, "attend your Queen, as you wish in your turn to be distinguished by like honors."

So saying, the Prince marshalled Rowena to the seat of honor opposite his own, while the fairest and most distinguished ladies present crowded after her to obtain places as near as possible to their temporary sovereign.

No sooner was Rowena seated than a burst of music, half-drowned by the shouts of the multitude, greeted her new dignity. Meantime, the sun shone fierce and bright upon the polished arms of the knights of either side, who crowded the opposite extremities of the lists, and held eager conference together concerning the best mode of arranging their line of battle and supporting the conflict.

The heralds then proclaimed silence until the laws of the tourney should be rehearsed. These were calculated in some degree to abate the dangers of the day—a precaution the more necessary as the conflict was to be maintained with sharp swords and pointed lances.

The champions were therefore prohibited to thrust with the sword, and were confined to striking. A knight, it was announced, might use a mace or battle-axe at pleasure; but the dagger was a prohibited weapon. A knight unhorsed might renew the fight on foot with any other on the opposite side in the same predicament; but mounted horsemen were in that case forbidden to assail him. When any knight could force his antagonist to the extremity of the lists, so as to touch the palisade with his person or arms, such opponent was obliged to yield himself vanquished, and his armor and horse were placed at the disposal of the conqueror. A knight thus overcome was not permitted to take further share in the combat. If any combatant was struck down, and unable to recover his feet, his squire or page might enter the lists and drag his master out of the press; but in that case the knight was adjudged vanquished, and his arms and horse declared forfeited. The combat was to cease as soon as Prince John should throw down his leading staff, or truncheon—another precaution usually taken to prevent the unnecessary effusion of blood by the too long endurance of a sport so desperate. Any knight breaking the rules of the tournament, or otherwise transgressing the rules of honorable chivalry, was liable to be stripped of his arms, and, having his shield reversed, to be placed in that posture astride upon the bars of the palisade, and exposed to public derision, in punishment of his unknightly conduct. Having announced these precautions, the heralds concluded with an exhortation to each good knight to do his duty, and to merit favor from the Queen of Beauty and Love.

This proclamation having been made, the heralds withdrew to their stations. The knights, entering at either end of the lists in long procession, arranged themselves in a double file, precisely opposite to each other, the leader of each party being in the center of the foremost rank, a post which he did not occupy until each had carefully arranged the ranks of his party, and stationed every one in his place.

It was a goodly, and at the same time an anxious, sight to behold so many gallant champions, mounted bravely and armed richly, stand ready prepared for an encounter so formidable, seated on their war-saddles like so many pillars of iron, and awaiting the signal of encounter with the same ardor as their generous steeds, which, by neighing and pawing the ground, gave signal of their impatience.

As yet the knights held their long lances upright, their bright points glancing to the sun, and the streamers with which they were decorated fluttering over the plumage of the helmets. Thus they remained while the marshals of the field surveyed their ranks with the utmost exactness, lest either party had more or fewer than the appointed number. The tale was found exactly complete. The marshals then withdrew from the lists, and William de Wyvil, with a voice of thunder, pronounced the signal words—"*Laissez aller!*"[13] The trumpets sounded as he spoke; the spears of the champions were at once lowered and placed in the rests; the spurs were dashed into the flanks of the horses; and the two foremost ranks of either party rushed upon each other in full gallop, and met in the middle of the lists with a shock the sound of which was heard at a mile's distance. The rear rank of each party advanced at a slower pace to sustain the defeated, and follow up the success of the victors, of their party.

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[13] *Laissez aller* means literally *Let go*.

The consequences of the encounter were not instantly seen, for the dust raised by the trampling of so many steeds darkened the air, and it was a minute ere the anxious spectators could see the fate of the encounter. When the fight became visible, half the knights on each side were dismounted—some by the dexterity of their adversary's lance; some by the superior weight and strength of opponents, which had borne down both horse and man; some lay stretched on earth as if never more to rise; some had already gained their feet, and were closing hand to hand with those of their antagonists who were in the same predicament; and several on both sides, who had received wounds by which they were disabled, were stopping their blood by their scarfs, and endeavoring to extricate themselves from the tumult. The mounted knights, whose lances had been almost all broken by the fury of the encounter, were now closely engaged with their swords, shouting their war-cries, and exchanging buffets, as if honor and life depended on the issue of the combat.

The tumult was presently increased by the advance of the second rank on either side, which, acting as a reserve, now rushed on to aid their companions. The followers of Brian de Bois-Guilbert shouted—"*Ha! Beau-seant! Beau-seant!*[14] For the Temple! For the Temple!" The opposite shouted in answer—"*Desdichado! Desdichado!*" which watchword they took from the motto upon their leaders' shield.

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[14] *Beau-seant* was the name given to the black and white banner of the Templars.

The champions thus encountering each other with the utmost fury, and with alternate success, the tide of battle seemed to flow now toward the southern, now toward the northern, extremity of the lists, as the one or the other party prevailed. Meantime the clang of the blows and the shouts of the combatants mixed fearfully with the sound of the trumpets, and drowned the groans of those who fell, and lay rolling defenceless beneath the feet of the horses. The splendid armor of the combatants was now defaced with dust and blood, and gave way at every stroke of the sword and battle-axe. The gay plumage, shorn from the crests, drifted upon the breeze like snowflakes. All that was beautiful and graceful in the martial array had disappeared, and what was now visible was only calculated to awake terror or compassion.

Yet such is the force of habit, that not only the vulgar spectators, who are naturally attracted by sights of horror, but even the ladies of distinction, who crowded the galleries, saw the conflict with a thrilling interest certainly, but without a wish to withdraw their eyes, from a sight so terrible. Here and there, indeed, a fair cheek might turn pale, or a faint scream might be heard, as a lover, a brother, or a husband was struck from his horse. But, in general, the ladies around encouraged the combatants, not only by clapping their hands and waving their veils and kerchiefs, but even by exclaiming, "Brave lance! Good sword!" when any successful thrust or blow took place under their observation.

Such being the interest taken by the fair sex in this bloody game, that of men is the more easily understood. It showed itself in loud acclamations upon every change of fortune, while all eyes were so riveted on the lists that the spectators seemed as if they themselves had dealt and received the blows which were there so freely bestowed. And between every pause was heard the voice of the heralds, exclaiming, "Fight on, brave knights! Man dies, but glory lives! Fight on; death is better than defeat! Fight on, brave knights! for bright eyes behold your deeds!"

Amid the varied fortunes of the combat, the eyes of all endeavored to discover the leaders of each band, who, mingling in the thick of the fight, encouraged their companions both by voice and example. Both displayed great feats of gallantry nor did either Bois-Guilbert or the Disinherited Knight find in the ranks opposed to them a champion who could be termed their unquestioned match. They repeatedly endeavored to single out each other, spurred by mutual animosity, and aware that the fall of either leader might be considered as decisive of victory. Such, however, was the crowd and confusion that, during the earlier part of the conflict, their efforts to meet were unavailing, and they were repeatedly separated by the eagerness of their followers, each of whom was anxious to win honor by measuring his strength against the leader of the opposite party.

But when the field became thin by the numbers on either side who had yielded themselves vanquished, had been compelled to the extremity of the lists, or been otherwise rendered incapable of continuing the strife, the Templar and the Disinherited Knight at length encountered hand to hand, with all the fury that mortal animosity, joined to rivalry of honor, could inspire. Such was the address of each in parrying and striking, that the spectators broke forth into a unanimous and involuntary shout, expressive of their delight and admiration.

But at this moment the party of the Disinherited Knight had the worst; the gigantic arm of Front-de-Bœuf on the one flank, and the ponderous strength of Athelstane on the other, bearing down and dispersing those immediately opposed to them. Finding themselves freed from their immediate antagonists, it seems to have occurred to both these knights at the same instant that they would render the most decisive advantage to their party by aiding the Templar in his contest with his rival. Turning their horses, therefore, at the same moment, the Norman spurred against the Disinherited Knight on the one side and the Saxon on the other. It was utterly impossible that the object of this unequal and unexpected assault could have sustained it, had he not been warned by a general cry from the spectators, who could not but take interest in one exposed to such disadvantage.

"Beware! beware! Sir Disinherited!" was shouted so universally that the knight became aware of his danger; and striking a full blow at the Templar, he reined back his steed in the same moment, so as to escape the charge of Athelstane and Front-de-Bœuf. These knights, therefore, their aim being thus eluded, rushed from opposite sides between the object of their attack and the Templar, almost running their horses against each other ere they could stop their career. Recovering their horses, however, and wheeling them round, the whole three pursued their united purpose of bearing to the earth the Disinherited Knight.

Nothing could have saved him except the remarkable strength and activity of the noble horse which he had won on the preceding day.

This stood him in the more stead, as the horse of Bois-Guilbert was wounded and those of Front-de-Bœuf and Athelstane were both tired with the weight of their gigantic masters, clad in complete armor, and with the preceding exertions of the day. The masterly horsemanship of the Disinherited Knight, and the activity of the noble animal which he mounted, enabled him for a few minutes to keep at sword's point his three antagonists, turning and wheeling with the agility of a hawk upon the wing, keeping his enemies as far separate as he could, and rushing now against the one, now against the other, dealing sweeping blows with his sword, without waiting to receive those which were aimed at him in return.

But although the lists rang with the applauses of his dexterity, it was evident that he must at last be overpowered; and the nobles around Prince John implored him with one voice to throw down his warder, and to save so brave a knight from the disgrace of being overcome by odds.

"Not I, by the light of Heaven!" answered Prince John: "this same springal,[15] who conceals his name and despises our proffered hospitality, hath already gained one prize, and may now afford to let others have their turn." As he spoke thus, an unexpected incident changed the fortune of the day.

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[15] *Springal* is an old word meaning *youth* or *young man*.

There was among the ranks of the Disinherited Knight a champion in black armor, mounted on a black horse, large of size, tall, and to all appearance powerful and strong, like the rider by whom he was mounted. This knight, who bore on his shield no device of any kind, had hitherto evinced very little interest in the event of the fight, beating off with seeming ease those combatants who attacked him, but neither pursuing his advantages nor himself assailing any one. In short, he had hitherto acted the part rather of a spectator than of a party in the tournament, a circumstance which procured him among the spectators the name of *Le Noir Faineant,* or the Black Sluggard.

At once this knight seemed to throw aside his apathy, when he discovered the leader of his party so hard bested; for, setting spurs to his horse, which was quite fresh, he came to his assistance like a thunderbolt, exclaiming, in a voice like a trumpet-call, "*Desdichado,* to the rescue!" It was high time; for, while the Disinherited Knight was pressing upon the Templar, Front-de-Bœuf had got nigh to him with his uplifted sword; but ere the blow could descend, the Sable Knight dealt a stroke on his head, which, glancing from the polished helmet, lighted with violence scarcely abated on the chamfron[16] of the steed, and Front-de-Bœuf rolled on the ground, both horse and man equally stunned by the fury of the blow. *Le Noir Faineant* then turned his horse upon Athelstane of Coningsburgh; and his own sword having been broken in his encounter with Front-de-Bœuf, he wrenched from the hand of the bulky Saxon the battle-axe which he wielded, and, like one familiar with the use of the weapon, bestowed him such a blow upon the crest that Athelstane also lay senseless on the field. Having achieved this double feat, for which he was the more highly applauded that it was totally unexpected from him, the knight seemed to resume the sluggishness of his character, returning calmly to the northern extremity of the lists, leaving his leader to cope as he best could with Brian de Bois-Guilbert. This was no longer matter of so much difficulty as formerly. The Templar's horse had bled much, and gave way under the shock of the Disinherited

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[16] The *chamfron* is the defensive armor of the front part of the head of a war-horse.

PRINCE JOHN THROWS DOWN THE TRUNCHEON

Knight's charge. Brian de Bois-Guilbert rolled on the field, encumbered with the stirrup, from which he was unable to draw his foot. His antagonist sprung from horseback, waved his fatal sword over the head of his adversary, and commanded him to yield himself; when Prince John, more moved by the Templar's dangerous situation than he had been by that of his rival, saved him the mortification of confessing himself vanquished, by casting down his warder and puting an end to the conflict.

It was, indeed, only the relics and embers of the fight which continued to burn; for of the few knights who still continued in the lists, the greater part had, by tacit consent, forborne the conflict for some time, leaving it to be determined by the strife of the leaders.

The squires, who had found it a matter of danger and difficulty to attend their masters during the engagement, now thronged into the lists to pay their dutiful attendance to the wounded, who were removed with the utmost care and attention to the neighboring pavilions, or to the quarters prepared for them in the adjoining village.

Thus ended the memorable field of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, one of the most gallantly contested tournaments of that age; for although only four knights, including one who was smothered by the heat of his armor, had died upon the field, yet upward of thirty were desperately wounded, four or five of whom never recovered. Several more were disabled for life; and those who escaped best carried the marks of the conflict to the grave with them. Hence it is always mentioned in the old records as the "gentle and joyous passage of arms of Ashby."

It being now the duty of Prince John to name the knight who had done best, he determined that the honor of the day remained with the knight whom the popular voice had termed *Le Noir Faineant*. It was pointed out to the Prince, in impeachment of this decree, that the victory had been in fact won by the Disinherited Knight, who, in the course of the day, had overcome six champions with his own hand, and who had finally unhorsed and struck down the leader of the opposite party. But Prince John adhered to his own opinion, on the ground that the Disinherited Knight and his party had lost the day but for the powerful assistance of the Knight of the Black Armor, to whom, therefore, he persisted in awarding the prize.

To the surprise of all present, however, the knight thus preferred was nowhere to be found. He had left the lists immediately when the conflict ceased, and had been observed by some spectators to move down one of the forest glades with the same slow pace and listless and indifferent manner which had procured him the epithet of the Black Sluggard.[17] After he had been summoned twice by sound of trumpet and proclamation of the heralds, it became necessary to name another to receive the honors which had been assigned to him. Prince John had now no further excuse for resisting the claim of the Disinherited Knight, whom, therefore, he named the champion of the day.

Through a field slippery with blood and encumbered with broken armor and the bodies of slain

[17] The Black Sluggard was the king of England, Richard the Lion-Hearted, who had been absent from England on a Crusade and had come back without allowing his brother John to know of his return.

and wounded horses, the marshals again conducted the victor to the foot of Prince John's throne.

"Disinherited Knight," said Prince John, "since by that title only you will consent to be known to us, we a second time award to you the honors of this tournament, and announce to you your right to claim and receive from the hands of the Queen of Love and Beauty the chaplet of honor which your valor has justly deserved."

The Knight bowed low and gracefully, but returned no answer.

While the trumpets sounded, while the heralds strained their voices in proclaiming honor to the brave and glory to the victor, while ladies waved their silken kerchiefs and embroidered veils, and while all ranks joined in a clamorous shout of exultation, the marshals conducted the Disinherited Knight across the lists to the foot of that throne of honor which was occupied by the Lady Rowena.

On the lower step of this throne the champion was made to kneel down. Indeed, his whole action since that the fight had ended seemed rather to have been upon the impulse of those around him than from his own free will; and it was observed that he tottered as they guided him the second time across the lists. Rowena, descending from her station with a graceful and dignified step, was about to place the chaplet which she held in her hand upon the helmet of the champion, when the marshals exclaimed with one voice, "It must not be thus; his head must be bare." The knight muttered faintly a few words, which were lost in the hollow of his helmet; but their purport seemed to be a desire that his casque might not be removed.

Whether from love of form or from curiosity, the marshals paid no attention to his expressions of reluctance, but unhelmed him by cutting the laces of his casque, and undoing the fastening of his gorget. When the helmet was removed the well-formed yet sun-burned features of a young man of twenty-five were seen, amid a profusion of short fair hair.

ROWENA CROWNING DISINHERITED KNIGHT

His countenance was as pale as death, and marked in one or two places with streaks of blood.

Rowena had no sooner beheld him that she uttered a faint shriek; but at once summoning up the energy of her disposition, and compelling herself, as it were, to proceed, while her frame yet trembled with the violence of sudden emotion, she placed upon the drooping head of the victor the splendid chaplet which was the destined reward of the day, and pronounced in a clear and distinct tone these words: "I bestow on thee this chaplet, Sir Knight, as the meed of valor assigned to this day's victor." Here she paused a moment, and then firmly added, "And upon brow more worthy could a wreath of chivalry never be placed!"

The knight stooped his head and kissed the hand of the lovely Sovereign by whom his valor had been rewarded; and then, sinking yet further forward, lay prostrate at her feet.

There was a general consternation. Cedric, who had been struck mute by the sudden appearance of his banished son, now rushed forward as if to separate him from Rowena. But this had been already accomplished by the marshals of the field, who, guessing the cause of Ivanhoe's swoon, had hastened to undo his armor, and found that the head of a lance had penetrated his breastplate and inflicted a wound in his side.

THE RAINBOW

By Thomas Campbell

TRIUMPHAL arch, that fill'st the sky
When storms prepare to part,
I ask not proud Philosophy
To teach me what thou art.

Still seem, as to my childhoods' sight,
A midway station given,
For happy spirits to alight,
Betwixt the earth and heaven.

Can all that optics teach, unfold
Thy form to please me so,
As when I dreamt of gems and gold
Hid in thy radiant bow?[1]

When science from creation's face
Enchantment's veil withdraws,
What lovely visions yield their place
To cold material laws!

And yet, fair bow, no fabling dreams,
But words of the Most High,
Have told why first thy robe of beams
Was woven in the sky.[2]

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[1] There was an old, old belief that a pot of god was hidden at the end of the rainbow, and that whoever found his way to the spot might claim the gold. This superstition has existed in almost all lands, and references to it are constantly to be found in literature.

[2] According to the account given in *Genesis IX*, God said to Noah after the flood:

"And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

When o'er the green undeluged earth
  Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the world's gray fathers forth
  To watch thy sacred sign!

And when its yellow lustre smiled
  O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child
  To bless the bow of God.

The earth to thee her incense yields,
  The lark thy welcome sings,
When, glittering in the freshen'd fields,
  The snowy mushroom springs.

How glorious is thy girdle, cast
  O'er mountain, tower, and town,
Or mirror'd in the ocean vast
  A thousand fathoms down!

As fresh in yon horizon dark,
  As young thy beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
  First sported in thy beam.

For, faithful to its sacred page,
  Heaven still rebuilds thy span;
Nor lets the type grow pale with age
  That first spoke peace to man.

"This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you for perpetual generations:

"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

"And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

"And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."

THE LION AND THE MISSIONARY

By DAVID LIVINGSTONE

NOTE.—Few men have endured more hardships, dangers and excitement that did David Livingstone, missionary and African traveler, from whose writings this account of an adventure with a lion is taken. He penetrated to parts of Africa where no white man had ever been before, he suffered repeated attacks of African fever, he exposed himself to constant danger from wild beasts and wilder men; and he did none of this in his own interests. He was no merchant seeking for gold and diamonds, he was no discoverer seeking for fame; his only aim was to open up the continent of Africa so that civilization and Christianity might enter.

In 1840 Livingstone was sent as medical missionary to South Africa. Here he joined Robert Moffat, in Bechuanaland, where he worked for nine years. Learning from the natives that there was a large lake to the northward, he set out on his first exploring trip, and at length discovered Lake Ngami. Later, he undertook other journeys of exploration, on one of which he reached the Atlantic coast and then returned, crossing the entire continent. His greatest achievement was the exploration of the lake region of South Africa. So cut off was he, in the African jungles, from all the outer world that no communication was received from him for three years, and fears as to his safety were relieved only when Stanley, sent out by the *New York Herald* to search for Livingstone, reported that he had seen and assisted him.

In May, 1873, Livingstone died, at a village near Lake Bangweolo. His body was taken to England and laid in Westminster Abbey, but his heart was buried at the foot of the tree under whose branches he died.

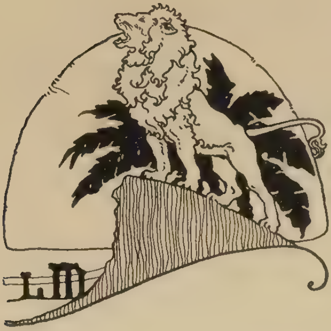
RETURNING toward Kuruman, I selected the beautiful valley of Mabotsa (latitude 25° 14′ south, longitude 26° 30′) as the site of a missionary station, and thither I removed in 1843. Here an occurrence took place concerning which I have frequently been questioned in England, and which, but for the importunities of friends, I meant to have kept in store to tell my children when in my dotage. The Bakatla of the village Mabotsa were much troubled by lions, which leaped into the cattle pens by night and destroyed their cows. They even attacked the herds in open day. This was so unusual an occurrence that the people believed that they were bewitched,—"given," as they said, "into the power of the lions by a neighboring tribe." They went once to attack the animals, but, being rather a cowardly people compared to Bechuanas in general on such occasions, they returned without killing any.

It is well known that if one of a troop of lions is killed, the others take the hint and leave that part of the country. So, the next time the herds were attacked, I went with the people, in order to encourage them to rid themselves of the annoyance by destroying one of the marauders. We found the lions on a small hill about a quarter of a mile in length, and covered with trees. A circle of men was formed round it, and they gradually closed up, ascending pretty near to each other. Being down below on the plain with a native schoolmaster, named Mebálwe, a most excellent man, I saw one of the lions sitting on a piece of rock within the now closed circle of men. Mebálwe fired at him before I could, and the ball struck the rock on which the animal was sitting. He bit at the spot struck, as a dog does at a stick or stone thrown at him; then leaping away, broke through the opening circle and escaped unhurt. The men were afraid to attack him, perhaps on account of their belief in witchcraft. When the circle was reformed, we saw two other lions in it; but we were afraid to fire lest we should strike the men, and they allowed the beasts to burst through also.

If the Bakatla had acted according to the custom of the country, they would have speared the lions in their attempt to get out. Seeing we could not get them to kill one of the lions, we bent our footsteps toward the village; in going round the end of the hill, however, I saw one of the beasts sitting on a piece of rock as before, but this time he had a little bush in front. Being about thirty yards off, I took a good aim at his body through the bush, and fired both barrels into it. The men then called out, "He is shot, he is shot!" Others cried, "He has been shot by another man too; let us go to him!" I did not see any one else shoot at him, but I saw the lion's tail erected in anger behind the bush, and turning to the people, said, "Stop a little, till I load again." When in the act of ramming down the bullets, I heard a shout. Starting, and looking half round, I saw the lion just in the act of springing upon me.

I was upon a little height; he caught my shoulder as he sprang, and we both came to the ground below together. Growling horribly close to my ear, he shook me as a terrier dog does a rat. The shock produced a stupor similar to that which seems to be felt by a mouse after the first shake of the cat. It caused a sort of dreaminess, in which there was no sense of pain nor feeling of terror, though I was quite conscious of all that was happening. It was like what patients partially under the influence of chloroform describe, who see all the operation, but feel not the knife. This singular condition was not the result of any mental process. The shake annihilated fear, and allowed no sense of horror in looking round at the beast. This peculiar state is probably produced in all animals killed by the carnivora; and if so, is a merciful provision by our benevolent Creator for lessening the pain of death. Turning round to relieve myself of the weight, as he had one paw on the back of my head, I saw his eyes directed to Mebálwe, who was trying to shoot him at a distance of ten or fifteen yards. His gun, a flint one, missed fire in both barrels; the lion immediately left me, and, attacking Mebálwe, bit his thigh. Another man, whose life I had saved before, after he had been tossed by a buffalo, attempted to spear the lion while he was biting Mebálwe. He left Mebálwe and caught this man by the shoulder, but at that moment the bullets he had received took effect, and he fell down dead. The whole was the work of a few moments, and must have been his paroxysms of dying rage. In order to take out the charm from him, the Bakatla on the following day made a huge bonfire over the carcass, which was declared to be that of the largest lion they had ever seen. Besides crunching the bone into splinters, he left eleven teeth wounds on the upper part of my arm.

A wound from this animal's tooth resembles a gunshot wound; it is generally followed by a great deal of sloughing and discharge, and pains are felt in the part, periodically ever afterward. I had on a tartan jacket on the occasion, and I believe that it wiped off all the virus from the teeth that pierced the flesh, for my two companions in this affray have both suffered from the peculiar pains, while I have escaped with only the inconvenience of a false joint in my limb. The man whose shoulder was wounded, showed me his wound actually burst forth afresh on the same month of the following year. This curious point certainly deserves the attention of inquirers.



THE MOSS ROSE

TRANSLATED FROM KRUMMACHER

THE angel of the flowers, one day,
Beneath a rose-tree sleeping lay,—
That spirit to whose charge 'tis given
To bathe young buds in dews of heaven.
Awaking from his light repose,
The angel whispered to the rose:
"O fondest object of my care,
Still fairest found, where all are fair;
For the sweet shade thou giv'st to me
Ask what thou wilt, 'tis granted thee."
"Then," said the rose, with deepened glow,
"On me another grace bestow."
The spirit paused, in silent thought,—
What grace was there that flower had not?
'Twas but a moment,—o'er the rose
A veil of moss the angel throws,
And, robed in nature's simplest weed,
Could there a flower that rose exceed?

FOUR DUCKS ON A POND

By WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

FOUR ducks on a pond,
A grass bank beyond,
A blue sky of spring,
White clouds on the wing;
What a little thing
To remember for years,
To remember with tears.

RAB AND HIS FRIENDS

By John Brown, M. D.

FOUR and thirty years ago, Bob Ainslie and I were coming up Infirmary street from the high school, our heads together, and our arms intertwisted, as only lovers and boys know how or why.

When we got to the top of the street, and turned north, we espied a crowd at the Tron-church. "A dog fight!" shouted Bob, and was off; and so was I, both of us all but praying that it might not be over before we got up! And is not this boy nature! and human nature too? and don't we all wish a house on fire not to be out before we see it? Dogs like fighting; old Isaac says they "delight" in it, and for the best of all reasons; and boys are not cruel because they like to see the fight. They see three of the great cardinal virtues of dog or man—courage, endurance, and skill—in intense action. This is very different from a love of making dogs fight, and enjoying, and aggravating, and making gain by their pluck. A boy—be he ever so fond himself of fighting, if he be a good boy, hates and despises all this, but he would have run off with Bob and me fast enough; it is a natural, and a not wicked, interest that all boys and men have in witnessing intense energy in action.

Does any curious and finely-ignorant woman wish to know how Bob's eye at a glance announced a dog fight to his brain? He did not, he could not see the dogs fighting; it was a flash of an inference, a rapid induction. The crowd round a couple of dogs fighting, is a crowd masculine mainly, with an occasional active, compassionate woman, fluttering wildly round the outside, and using her tongue and her hands freely upon the men, as so many "brutes"; it is a crowd annular, compact and mobile; a crowd centripetal, having its eyes and its heads all bent downward and inward, to one common focus.

Well, Bob and I are up, and find it is not over; a small thoroughbred, white bull-terrier, is busy throttling a large shepherd's dog, unaccustomed to war, but not to be trifled with. They are hard at it; the scientific little fellow doing his work in great style, his pastoral enemy fighting wildly, but with the sharpest of teeth and a great courage. Science and breeding, however, soon had their own; the Game Chicken, as the premature Bob called him, working his way up, took his final grip of poor Yarrow's throat—and he lay gasping and done for. His master, a brown, handsome, big young shepherd from Tweedsmuir, would have liked to have knocked down any man, would "drink up Esil, or eat a crocodile," for that part, if he had a chance; it was no use kicking the little dog; that would only make him hold the closer. Many were the means shouted out in mouthfuls, of the best possible ways of ending it.

"Water!" but there was none near, and many cried for it who might have got it from the well at Blackfriars Wynd.

"Bite the tail!" and a large, vague, benevolent, middle-aged man, more desirous than wise, with some struggle got the bushy end of Yarrow's tail into his ample mouth, and bit it with all his might. This was more than enough for the much-enduring, much-perspiring shepherd, who, with a gleam of joy over his broad visage, delivered a terrific facer upon our large, vague, benevolent, middle-aged friend—who went down like a shot.

Still the Chicken holds; death not far off.

"Snuff! a pinch of snuff!" observed a calm, highly-dressed young buck, with an eye-glass in his eye. "Snuff, indeed!" growled the angry crowd, affronted and glaring.

"Snuff! a pinch of snuff!" again observes the buck, but with more urgency; whereupon were produced several open boxes, and from a mull which may have been at Culloden, he took a pinch, knelt down, and presented it to the nose of the Chicken. The laws of physiology and of snuff take their course; the Chicken sneezes, and Yarrow is free.

The young pastoral giant stalks off with Yarrow in his arms—comforting him.

But the bull-terrier's blood is up, and his soul unsatisfied; he grips the first dog he meets, and discovering she is not a dog, in Homeric phrase, he makes a brief sort of *amende,*[1] and is off. The boys, with Bob and me at their head, are after him; down Niddry street he goes, bent on mischief; up the Cowgate like an arrow—Bob and I, and our small men, panting behind.

There, under the single arch of the South bridge is a huge mastiff, sauntering down the middle of the causeway, as if with his hands in his pockets; he is old, gray, brindled, as big as a little Highland bull, and has the Shakespearian dewlaps shaking as he goes.

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[1] *Amende* means *apology.*

The Chicken makes straight at him, and fastens on his throat. To our astonishment, the great creature does nothing but stand still, holds himself up, and roar—yes, roar; a long, serious, remonstrative roar. How is this? Bob and I are up to them. *He is muzzled!* The bailies had proclaimed a general muzzling, and his master, studying strength and economy mainly, had encompassed his huge jaws in a homemade apparatus, constructed out of the leather of some ancient breechin. His mouth was open as far as it could; his lips curled up in rage—a sort of terrible grin; his teeth gleaming, ready, from out of the darkness; the strap across his mouth tense as a bow string; his whole frame stiff with indignation and surprise; his roar asking us all round, "Did you ever see the like of this?"

He looked a statue of anger and astonishment, done in Aberdeen granite.

We soon had a crowd; the Chicken held on. "A knife!" cried Bob; and a cobbler gave him his knife; you know the kind of knife, worn away obliquely to a point, and always keen. I put its edge to the tense leather; it ran before it; and then!—one sudden jerk of that enormous head, a sort of dirty mist about his mouth, no noise, and the bright and fierce little fellow is dropped, limp, and dead. A solemn pause; this was more than any of us had bargained for. I turned the little fellow over, and saw he was quite dead; the mastiff had taken him by the small of the back, like a rat, and broken it.

He looked down at his victim appeased, ashamed and amazed; snuffed him all over, stared at him, and taking a sudden thought, turned round and trotted off.

Bob took the dead dog up, and said, "John, we'll bury him after tea."

"Yes," said I, and was off after the mastiff. He made up the Cowgate at a rapid swing; he had forgotten some engagement. He turned up the Candlemaker Row, and stopped at the Harrow Inn.

"RAB, YE THIEF!"

There was a carrier's cart ready to start, and a keen, thin, impatient, black-a-vised little man, his hand at his gray horse's head looking about angrily for something.

"Rab, ye thief!" said he, aiming a kick at my great friend, who drew cringing up, and avoiding the heavy shoe with more agility than dignity, and watching his master's eye, slunk dismayed under the cart—his ears down, and as much as he had of tail down too.

What a man this must be—thought I—to whom my tremendous hero turns tail! The carrier saw the muzzle hanging, cut and useless, from his neck, and I eagerly told him the story which Bob and I always thought, and still think, Homer, or King David, or Sir Walter, alone were worthy to rehearse. The severe little man was mitigated, and condescended to say, "Rab, ma man, puir Rabbie"—whereupon the stump of a tail rose up, the ears were cocked, the eyes filled, and were comforted; the two friends were reconciled. "Hupp!" and a stroke of the whip were given to Jess; and off went the three.

Bob and I buried the Game Chicken that night (we had not much of a tea) in the back-green of his house in Melville street, No. 17, with considerable gravity and silence; and being at the time in the Iliad, and, like all boys, Trojans, we called him Hector of course.

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Six years have passed—a long time for a boy and a dog: Bob Ainslie is off to the wars; I am a medical student, and clerk at Minto House Hospital.

Rab I saw almost every week, on the Wednesday; and we had much pleasant intimacy. I found the way to his heart by frequent scratching of his huge head, and an occasional bone. When I did not notice him he would plant himself straight before me, and stand wagging that bud of a tail, and looking up, with his head a little to the one side. His master I occasionally saw; he used to call me "Maister John," but was laconic as any Spartan.

One fine October afternoon, I was leaving the hospital when I saw the large gate open, and in walked Rab with that great and easy saunter of his. He looked as if taking general possession of the place; like the Duke of Wellington entering a subdued city, satiated with victory and peace.

After him came Jess, now white from age, with her cart; and in it a woman, carefully wrapped up—the carrier leading the horse anxiously, and looking back.

When he saw me, James (for his name was James Noble) made a curt and grotesque "boo," and said, "Maister John, this is the mistress; she's got a trouble in her breest—some kind of an income we'er thinkin'."

By this time I saw the woman's face; she was sitting on a sack filled with straw, her husband's plaid round her, and his big-coat, with its large white metal buttons, over her feet.

I never saw a more unforgettable face—pale, serious, *lonely,* delicate, sweet, without being at all what we call fine. She looked sixty, and had on a mutch, white as snow, with its black ribbon; her silvery, smooth hair setting off her dark-gray eyes—eyes such as one sees only twice or thrice in a lifetime, full of suffering, full also of the overcoming of it; her eyebrows black and delicate, and her mouth firm, patient, and contented, which few mouths ever are.

As I have said, I never saw a more beautiful countenance, or a more subdued or settled quiet. "Ailie," said James, "this is Maister John, the young doctor; Rab's freend, ye ken. We often speak aboot you, doctor."

She smiled, and made a movement, but said nothing; and prepared to come down, putting her plaid aside and rising. Had Solomon, in all his glory, been handing down the Queen of Sheba, at his palace gate, he could not have done it more daintily, more tenderly, more like a gentleman, than did James, the Howgate carrier, when he lifted down Ailie, his wife.

The contrast of his small, swarthy, weatherbeaten, keen, worldly face to hers—pale, subdued, and beautiful—was something wonderful. Rab looked on concerned and puzzled, but ready for anything that might turn up—were it to strangle the nurse, the porter, or even me. Ailie and he seemed great friends.

"As I was sayin', she's got a kind o' trouble in her breest, doctor; wull ye tak' a look at it?" We walked into the consulting-room, all four; Rab grim and comic, willing to be happy and confidential if cause could be shown, willing also to be the reverse on the same terms. Ailie sat down, undid her open gown and her lawn handkerchief round her neck, and, without a word, showed me her right breast. I looked at and examined it carefully, she and James watching me, and Rab eying all three. What could I say? There it was that had once been so soft, so shapely, so white, so gracious and bountiful, so "full of all blessed conditions"—hard as a stone, a center of horrid pain, making that pale face, with its gray, lucid, reasonable eyes, and its sweet resolved mouth, express the full measure of suffering overcome. Why was that gentle, modest, sweet woman, clean and lovable, condemned by God to bear such a burden?"

I got her away to bed.

"May Rab and me bide?" said James.

"*You* may; and Rab, if he will behave himself."

"I'se warrant he's do that, doctor;" and in slunk the faithful beast.

I wish you could have seen him. There are no such dogs now. He belonged to a lost tribe. As I have said, he was brindled, and gray like Rubislaw granite; his hair short, hard, and close, like a lion's; his body thickset, like a little bull—a sort of compressed Hercules of a dog. He must have been ninety pounds' weight, at the least; he had a large blunt head; his muzzle black as night, his mouth blacker than any night, a tooth or two—being all he had—gleaming out of his jaws of darkness. His head was scarred with the records of old wounds, a sort of series of fields of battle all over it; one eye out, one ear cropped as close as was Archbishop Leighton's father's; the remaining eye had the power of two; and above it, and in constant communication with it, was a tattered rag of an ear, which was forever unfurling itself, like an old flag; and then that bud of a tail, about one inch long, if it could in any sense be said to be long, being as broad as long—the mobility, the instantaneousness of that bud were very funny and surprising, and its expressive twinklings and winkings, the intercommunications between the eye, the ear, and it, were of the oddest and swiftest.

Rab had the dignity and simplicity of great size; and having fought his way all along the road to absolute supremacy, he was as mighty in his own line as Julius Cæsar or the Duke of Wellington, and had the gravity of all great fighters.

You must have often observed the likeness of certain men to certain animals, and of certain dogs to men. Now, I never looked at Rab without thinking of the great Baptist preacher, Andrew Fuller. The same large, heavy, menacing, combative, sombre, honest countenance, the same deep inevitable eye, the same look—as of thunder asleep, but ready—neither a dog nor a man to be trifled with.

Next day, my master, the surgeon, examined Ailie. There was no doubt it must kill her, and soon. It could be removed—it might never return—it would give her speedy relief—she should have it done.

She curtsied, looked at James, and said, "When?"

"To-morrow," said the kind surgeon—a man of few words.

She and James and Rab and I retired. I noticed that he and she spoke a little, but seemed to anticipate everything in each other. The following day at noon, the students came in, hurrying up the great stair. At the first landingplace, on a small well-known blackboard, was a bit of paper fastened by wafers and many remains of old wafers beside it. On the paper were the words—"An operation to-day. J. B., *Clerk.*"

Up ran the youths, eager to secure good places; in they crowded, full of interest and talk.

"What's the case? Which side is it?"

Don't think them heartless; they are neither better nor worse than you or I; they get over their professional horrors, and into their proper work; and in them pity—as an *emotion,* ending in itself or at best in tears and a long-drawn breath, lessens, while pity as a *motive* is quickened, and gains power and purpose. It is well for poor human nature that it is so.

The operating theatre is crowded; much talk and fun, and all the cordiality and stir of youth. The surgeon with his staff of assistants is there. In comes Ailie; one look at her quiets and abates the eager students. The beautiful old woman is too much for them. They sit down, and are dumb, and gaze at her. These rough boys feel the power of her presence.

She walks in quickly, but without haste; dressed in her mutch, her neckerchief, her white dimity short-gown, her black bombazine petticoat, showing her white worsted stockings and her carpet-shoes. Behind her was James with Rab. James sat down in the distance, and took that huge and noble head between his knees. Rab looked perplexed and dangerous; forever cocking his ear and dropping it as fast.

Ailie stepped up on a seat, and laid herself on the table, as her friend the surgeon told her; arranged herself, gave a rapid look at James, shut her eyes, rested herself on me, and took my hand. The operation was at once begun; it was necessarily slow; and chloroform—one of God's best gifts to his suffering children—was then unknown. The surgeon did his work. Rab's soul was working within him; he saw that something strange was going on—blood flowing from his mistress, and she suffering; his ragged ear was up, and importunate; he growled and gave now and then a sharp impatient yelp; he would have liked to have done something to that man. But James had him firm, and gave him a *glower*[2] from time to time, and an intimation of a possible kick;—all the better for James, it kept his eye and his mind off Ailie.

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[2] *Glower,* a Scotch word meaning a savage stare.

It is over; she is dressed, steps gently and decently down from the table, looks for James; then, turning to the surgeon and the students, she curtsies—and in a low, clear voice, begs their pardon if she has behaved ill. The students—all of us—wept like children; the surgeon happed her up carefully—and, resting on James and me, Ailie went to her room, Rab following. We put her to bed. James took off his heavy shoes, crammed with tackets, heel-capt and toe-capt, and put them carefully under the table, saying, "Maister John, I'm for nane o' yer strynge nurse bodies for Ailie. I'll be her nurse, and I'll gang about on my stockin' soles as canny as pussy."

And so he did; handy and clever, and swift and tender as any woman, was that horny-handed, snell, peremptory little man. Everything she got he gave her; he seldom slept; and often I saw his small, shrewd eyes out of the darkness, fixed on her. As before, they spoke little.

Rab behaved well, never moving, showing us how meek and gentle he could be, and occasionally, in his sleep, letting us know that he was demolishing some adversary. He took a walk with me every day, generally to the Candlemaker Row; but he was sombre and mild; declined doing battle, though some fit cases offered, and indeed submitted to sundry indignities; and was always very ready to turn and came faster back, and trotted up the stair with much lightness, and went straight to that door.

Jess, the mare, had been sent, with her weather-worn cart, to Howgate, and had doubtless her own dim and placid meditations and confusions, on the absence of her master and Rab, and her unnatural freedom from the road and her cart.

For some days Ailie did well. The wound healed "by the first intention;" for as James said, "Our Ailie's skin's ower clean to beil." The students came in quiet and anxious, and surrounded her bed. She said she liked to see their young, honest faces. The surgeon dressed her, and spoke to her in his own short, kind way, pitying her through his eyes, Rab and James outside the circle—Rab being now reconciled, and even cordial, and having made up his mind that as yet nobody required worrying, but as you may suppose *semper paratus.*[3]

So far well; but four days after the operation my patient had a sudden and long shivering, a "groosin'," as she called it. I saw her soon after; her eyes were too bright, her cheek colored; she was restless, and ashamed of being so; the balance was lost; mischief had begun.

On looking at the wound, a blush of red told the secret; her pulse was rapid, her breathing anxious and quick, she wasn't herself, as she said, and was vexed at her restlessness. We tried what we could, James did everything, was everywhere; never in the way, never out of it. Rab subsided under the table into a dark place, and was motionless, all but his eye, which followed every one. Ailie got worse; began to wander in her mind, gently; was more demonstrative in her ways to James, rapid in her questions, and sharp at times. He was vexed, and said, "She was never that way afore; no, never."

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[3] *Semper paratus* means *always ready.*

For a time she knew her head was wrong, and was always asking our pardon—the dear, gentle old woman; then delirium set in strong, without pause. Her brain gave way, and then came that terrible spectacle,

"The intellectual power, through words and things,
Went sounding on its dim and perilous way;"

she sang bits of old songs and psalms, stopping suddenly, mingling the Psalms of David, and the diviner words of his Son and Lord, with homely odds and ends and scraps of ballads.

Nothing more touching, or in a sense more strangely beautiful, did I ever witness. Her tremulous, rapid, affectionate, eager, Scotch voice—the swift, aimless, bewildered mind, the baffled utterance, the bright and perilous eye; some wild words, some household cares, something for James, the names of the dead, Rab called rapidly and in a "fremyt"[4] voice, and he starting up, surprised, and slinking off as if he were to blame somehow, or had been dreaming he heard. Many eager questions and beseechings which James and I could make nothing of, and on which she seemed to set her all, and then sink back ununderstood. It was very sad, but better than many things that are not called sad. James hovered about, put out and miserable, but active and exact as ever; read to her, when there was a lull, short bits from the Psalms, prose and metre, chanting the latter in his own rude and serious way, showing great knowledge of the fit words, bearing up like a man, and doating over her as his "ain Ailie," "Ailie, ma woman!" "Ma ain bonnie wee dawtie!"

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[4] *Fremyt* means *trembling, querulous.*

The end was drawing on: the golden bowl was breaking; the silver cord was fast being loosed—that *animula blandula, vagula, hospes, comesque*[5] was about to flee. The body and the soul—companions for sixty years—were being sundered, and taking leave. She was walking, alone, through the valley of that shadow, into which one day we must all enter—and yet she was not alone, for we knew whose rod and staff were comforting her.

One night she had fallen quiet, and as we hoped, asleep; her eyes were shut. We put down the gas and sat watching her. Suddenly she sat up in bed, and taking a bedgown which was lying on it rolled up, she held it eagerly to her breast—to the right side. We could see her eyes bright with surpassing tenderness and joy, bending over this bundle of clothes. She held it as a woman holds her sucking child; opening out her nightgown impatiently, and holding it close, and brooding over it, and murmuring foolish little words, as one whom his mother comforteth, and who sucks and is satisfied. It was pitiful and strange to see her wasting dying look, keen and yet vague—her immense love.

"Preserve me!" groaned James, giving away. And then she rocked back and forward, as if to make it sleep, hushing it, and wasting on it her infinite fondness.

"Wae's me, doctor; I declare she's thinkin' it's that bairn."

"What bairn?"

"The only bairn we ever had; our wee Mysie, and she's in the Kingdom, forty years and mair."

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5. *Animula blandula, vagula, hospes, comesque,* means *sweet fleeting life, companion and sojourner.*

It was plainly true: the pain in the breast telling its urgent story to a bewildered, ruined brain, was misread, and mistaken; it suggested to her the uneasiness of a breast full of milk, and then the child; and so again once more they were together, and she had her ain wee Mysie in her bosom.

This was the close. She sank rapidly: the delirium left her; but, as she whispered, she was "clean silly"; it was the lightening before the final darkness. After having for some time lain still—her eyes shut, she said, "James!"

He came close to her, and lifting up her calm, clear, beautiful eyes, she gave him a long look, turned to me kindly but shortly, looked for Rab but could not see him, then turned to her husband again, as if she would never leave off looking, shut her eyes and composed herself. She lay for some time breathing quick, and passed away so gently, that when we thought she was gone, James, in his old-fashioned way, held the mirror to her face. After a long pause, one small spot of dimness was breathed out; it vanished away, and never returned, leaving the blank clear darkness of the mirror without a stain. "What is your life? it is even a vapor, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Rab all this time had been full awake and motionless; he came forward beside us; Ailie's hand, which James had held, was hanging down; it was soaked with his tears; Rab licked it all over carefully, looked at her, and returned to his place under the table.

James and I sat, I don't know how long, but for some time—saying nothing: he started up, abruptly, and with some noise went to the table, and putting his right fore and middle fingers each into a shoe, pulled them out, and put them on, breaking one of the leather latchets, and muttering in anger, "I never did the like o' that afore."

I believe he never did; nor after either. "Rab!" he said roughly, and pointing with his thumb to the bottom of the bed. Rab leaped up, and settled himself; his head and eye to the dead face. "Maister John, ye'll wait for me," said the carrier, and disappeared in the darkness, thundering downstairs in his heavy shoes. I ran to a front window: there he was, already round the house, and out at the gate fleeing like a shadow.

I was afraid about him, and yet not afraid; so I sat down beside Rab, and being wearied, fell asleep. I awoke from a sudden noise outside. It was November, and there had been a heavy fall of snow. Rab was *in statu quo;*[6] he heard the noise too, and plainly knew it, but never moved. I looked out, and there, at the gate, in the dim morning—for the sun was not up—was Jess and the cart—a cloud of steam rising from the old mare. I did not see James; he was already at the door, and came up to the stairs, and met me. It was less than three hours since he left, and he must have posted out—who knows how—to Howgate, full nine miles off; yoked Jess, and driven her astonished into town. He had an armful of blankets, and was streaming with perspiration. He nodded to me, spread out on the floor two pairs of clean old blankets, having at their corners "A. G., 1794," in large letters in red worsted. These were the initials of Alison Græme, and James may have looked in at her from without—himself unseen

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6. *In statu quo* means *in the same position.*

but not unthought of—when he was "wat, wat and weary," and after having walked many a mile over the hills, may have seen her sitting, while "a' the lave were sleepin';" and by the firelight working her name on the blankets, for her ain James' bed.

He motioned Rab down, and taking his wife in his arms, laid her in the blankets, and happed her carefully and firmly up, leaving the face uncovered; and then lifting her, he nodded again sharply to me, and with a resolved but utterly miserable face, strode along the passage, and downstairs, followed by Rab. I followed with a light; but he didn't need it. I went out, holding stupidly the candle in my hand in the calm frosty air; we were soon at the gate. I could have helped him, but I saw he was not to be meddled with, and he was strong, and did not need it. He laid her down as tenderly, as safely, as he had lifted her out ten days before—as tenderly as when he had her first in his arms when she was only "A. G."—sorted her, leaving that beautiful sealed face open to the heavens; and then taking Jess by the head, he moved away. He did not notice me, neither did Rab, who presided behind the cart.

I stood till they passed through the long shadow of the College, and turned up Nicholson Street. I heard the solitary cart sound through the streets, and die away and come again; and I returned, thinking of that company going up Libberton Brae, then along Roslin Muir, the morning light touching the Pentlands and making them on-looking ghosts; then down the hill through Auchindinny woods, past "haunted Woodhouselee"; and as daybreak came sweeping up the bleak Lammermuirs, and fell on his own door, the company would stop, and James would take the key, and lift Ailie up again, laying her on her own bed, and, having put Jess up, would return with Rab and shut the door.

James buried his wife, with his neighbors mourning, Rab inspecting the solemnity from a distance.

JAMES BURIED HIS WIFE

It was snow, and that black ragged hole would look strange in the midst of the swelling spotless cushion of white. James looked after everything; then rather suddenly fell ill, and took to bed; was insensible when the doctor came, and soon died. A sort of low fever was prevailing in the village, and his want of sleep, his exhaustion, and his misery, made him apt to take it. The grave was not difficult to reopen. A fresh fall of snow had again made all things white and smooth; Rab once more looked on, and slunk home to the stable.

And what of Rab? I asked for him next week of the new carrier who got the goodwill of James's business, and was now master of Jess and her cart.

"How's Rab?"

He put me off, and said rather rudely, "What's *your* business wi' the dowg?"

I was not to be so put off.

"Where's Rab?"

He, getting confused and red, and intermeddling with his hair, said, " 'Deed sir, Rab's died."

"Dead! what did he die of?"

"Well, sir," said he, getting redder. "he didna exactly dee; he was killed. I had to brain him wi' a rack-pin; there was nae doing wi' him. He lay in the treviss wi' the mear, and wadna come oot. I tempit him wi' the kail and meat, but he wad tak naething, and keepit me frae feedin' the beast, and he was aye gur gurrin', and grup gruppin' me by the legs. I was laith to make awa wi' the old dowg, his like wasne atween this and Thornhill—but, 'deed, sir, I could do naething else."

I believed him. Fit end for Rab, quick and complete. His teeth and his friends gone, why should he keep the peace and be civil?

ANNIE LAURIE

Note.—Concerning the history of this song it is stated on good authority that there did really live, in the seventeenth century, an Annie Laurie. She was a daughter of Sir Robert Laurie, first baronet of the Maxwelton family, and was celebrated for her beauty. We should be glad to hear that Annie Laurie married the Mr. Douglas whose love for her inspired the writing of this poem, but records show that she became the wife of another man.

Only the first two verses were composed by Douglas; the last was added by an unknown author.

MAXWELTON braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true,—
Gie'd me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw drift;
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on,—
That e'er the sun shone on;
And dark blue is her ee;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet;

And like winds in summer sighing,
Her voice is low and sweet,—
Her voice is low and sweet;
And she's a' the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

THE BLIND LASSIE

By T. C. LATTO

O HARK to the strain that sae[1] sweetly is ringin',
And echoing clearly o'er lake and o'er lea,[2]
Like some fairy bird in the wilderness singin';
It thrills to my heart, yet nae[3] minstrel I see.
Round yonder rock knittin', a dear child is sittin',
Sae toilin' her pitifu' pittance[4] is won,
Hersel' tho' we see nae,[5] 'tis mitherless[6] Jeanie—
The bonnie[7] blind lassie that sits i' the sun.

Five years syne come autumn[8] she cam'[9] wi' her mither,
A sodger's[10] puir[11] widow, sair[12] wasted an' gane;[13]

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1. *Sae* is the Scotch word for *so*.
2. A lea is a grassy field or meadow.
3. *Nae* means *no*.
4. *Pittance* means *small earnings*.
5. *Nae* is *not*.
6. *Mither* is the Scotch form of *mother*.
7. *Bonnie* means *pretty*.
8. *Since come autumn;* that is, it will be nine years next autumn.
9. *Cam'* is a contraction of *came*.
10. *Sodger's* is *soldier's*.
11. *Puir* is the Scotch spelling of *poor*.
12. *Sair* is *sore*, that is, *sadly*.
13. *Gane* means *gone*.

As brown fell the leaves, sae wi' them did she wither,
And left the sweet child on the wide world her lane.[14]
She left Jeanie weepin', in His holy keepin'
Wha[15] shelters the lamb frae[16] the cauld[17] wintry win';
We had little siller,[18] yet a' were good till her,
The bonnie blind lassie that sits i' the sun.

An' blythe now an' cheerfu', frae mornin' to e'enin
She sits thro' the simmer, an' gladdens ilk[19] ear,
Baith[20] auld and young daut[21] her, sae gentle and winnin';
To a' the folks round the wee lassie is dear.
Braw[22] leddies[23] caress her, wi' bounties would press her;
The modest bit[24] darlin' their notice would shun;
For though she has naething, proud-hearted this wee thing,
The bonnie blind lassie that sits i' the sun.

[14] *Her lane* means *by herself.*
[15] *Wha* is Scotch for *who.*
[16] *Frae* means *from.*
[17] *Cauld* is the Scotch form of *cold.*
[18] *Siller* means *silver money*, or simply *money.*
[19] *Ilk* means *every.*
[20] *Baith* is Scotch for *both.*
[21] *Daut* means *pet.*
[22] *Braw* means *fine*, or *gay.*
[23] *Leddies* is the Scotch form of *ladies.*
[24] *Bit* means *little.*

BOYHOOD

By Washington Allston

AH, THEN how sweetly closed those crowded days!
The minutes parting one by one like rays,
  That fade upon a summer's eve.
But O, what charm or magic numbers
Can give me back the gentle slumbers
  Those weary, happy days did leave?
When by my bed I saw my mother kneel,
  And with her blessing took her nightly kiss;
  Whatever Time destroys, he cannot this;—
E'en now that nameless kiss I feel.

SWEET AND LOW

Note.—In Tennyson's long poem *The Princess* is a little lullaby so wonderfully sweet that all who have read it wish to read it again. It is one that we all love, no matter whether we are little children and hear it sung to us or are older children and look back to the evenings when we listened to mother's loving voice as she led us gently into the land of dreams while she watched patiently for father's return.

Here are the stanzas which are usually known by the name *Sweet and Low:*

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
  Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
  Wind of the western sea!

Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
  Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
  Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

It is interesting to try to determine just how a great poet makes us feel so strongly the thing that he tells us. In this case Tennyson thinks of a mother in England and a father who is somewhere in the West, out on the broad Atlantic, but is coming home to his little one. The mother dreams only of the home-coming of her husband, and she wishes the baby to learn to love its father as much as she does, so as she sings the little one to sleep, she pours out her love for both in beautiful melody.

To express this mother-love and anxious care the poet has chosen simple words that have rich, musical sounds, that can be spoken easily and smoothly and that linger on the tongue. He speaks of the sea, the gentle wind, the rolling waters, the dying moon and the silver sails, all of which call up ideas that rest us and make us happy, and then with rare skill he arranges the words so that when we read the lines we can feel the gentle rocking movement that lulls the little one, the pretty one into its gentle slumbers.

CHILDHOOD[1]

By Donald G. Mitchell

ISABEL and I—she is my cousin, and is seven years old, and I am ten—are sitting together on the bank of a stream, under an oak tree that leans half way over to the water. I am much stronger than she, and taller by a head. I hold in my hands a little alder rod, with which I am fishing for the roach and minnows, that play in the pool below us.

She is watching the cork tossing on the water, or playing with the captured fish that lie upon the bank. She has auburn ringlets that fall down upon her shoulders; and her straw hat lies back upon them, held only by the strip of ribbon, that passes under her chin. But the sun does not shine upon her head; for the oak tree above us is full of leaves; and only here and there, a dimple of the sunlight plays upon the pool, where I am fishing.

Her eye is hazel, and bright; and now and then she turns it on me with a look of girlish curiosity, as I lift up my rod—and again in playful menace, as she grasps in her little fingers one of the dead fish, and threatens to throw it back upon the stream. Her little feet hang over the edge of the bank; and from time to time, she reaches down to dip her toe in the water; and laughs a girlish laugh of defiance, as I scold her for frightening away the fishes.

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[1] From *Reveries of a Bachelor*, by Donald G. Mitchell (Ik Marvel).

"Bella," I say, "what if you should tumble in the river?"

"But I won't."

"Yes, but if you should?"

SHE REACHES DOWN TO DIP HER TOE

"Why then you would pull me out."

"But if I wouldn't pull you out?"

"But I know you would; wouldn't you, Paul?"

"What makes you think so, Bella?"

"Because you love Bella."

"How do you know I love Bella?"

"Because once you told me so; and because you pick flowers for me that I cannot reach; and because you let me take your rod, when you have a fish upon it."

"But that's no reason, Bella."

"Then what is, Paul?"

"I'm sure I don't know, Bella."

A little fish has been nibbling for a long time at the bait; the cork has been bobbing up and down—and now he is fairly hooked, and pulls away toward the bank, and you cannot see the cork.

"Here, Bella, quick!"—and she springs eagerly to clasp her little hands around the rod. But the fish has dragged it away on the other side of me; and as she reaches farther, and farther, she slips, cries—"Oh, Paul!" and falls into the water.

The stream, they told us when we came, was over a man's head—it is surely over little Isabel's. I fling down the rod, and thrusting one hand into the roots that support the overhanging bank, I grasp at her hat, as she comes up; but the ribbons give way, and I see the terribly earnest look upon her face as she goes down again. Oh, my mother—thought I—if you were only here!

But she rises again; this time, I thrust my hand into her dress, and struggling hard, keep her at the top, until I can place my foot down upon a projecting root; and so bracing myself, I drag her to the bank, and having climbed up, take hold of her belt firmly with both hands, and drag her out; and poor Isabel, choked, chilled, and wet, is lying upon the grass.

I commence crying aloud. The workmen in the fields hear me, and come down. One takes Isabel in his arms, and I follow on foot to our uncle's home upon the hill.

—"Oh, my dear children!" says my mother; and she takes Isabel in her arms; and presently with dry clothes, and blazing wood-fire, little Bella smiles again. I am at my mother's knee.

"I told you so, Paul," says Isabel—"aunty, doesn't Paul love me?"

"I hope so, Bella," said my mother.

"I know so," said I; and kissed her cheek.

And how did I know it? The boy does not ask; the man does. Oh, the freshness, the honesty, the vigor of a boy's heart! how the memory of it refreshes like the first gush of spring, or the break of an April shower!

But boyhood has its PRIDE, as well as its LOVES.

My uncle is a tall, hard-faced man; I fear him when he calls me—"child;" I love him when he calls me—"Paul." He is almost always busy with his books; and when I steal into the library door, as I sometimes do, with a string of fish, or a heaping basket of nuts to show to him—he looks for a moment curiously at them, sometimes takes them in his fingers—gives them back to me, and turns over the leaves of his book. You are afraid to ask him if you have not worked bravely; yet you want to do so.

You sidle out softly, and go to your mother; she scarce looks at your little stores; but she draws you to her with her arm, and prints a kiss upon your forehead. Now your tongue is unloosed; that kiss and that action have done it; you will tell what capital luck you have had; and you hold up your tempting trophies; "are they not great, mother?" But she is looking in your face, and not at your prize.

"Take them, mother," and you lay the basket upon her lap.

"Thank you, Paul, I do not wish them: but you must give some to Bella."

And away you go to find laughing, playful, cousin Isabel. And we sit down together on the grass, and I pour out my stores between us. "You shall take, Bella, what you wish in your apron, and then when study hours are over, we will have such a time down by the big rock in the meadow!"

"But I do not know if papa will let me," says Isabel.

"Bella," I say, "do you love your papa?"

"Yes," says Bella, "why not?"

"Because he is so cold; he does not kiss you, Bella, so often as my mother does; and besides, when he forbids your going away, he does not say, as mother does—my little girl will be tired, she had better not go—but he says only—Isabel must not go. I wonder what makes him talk so?"

"Why Paul, he is a man, and doesn't—at any rate, I love him, Paul. Besides, my mother is sick, you know."

"But Isabel, my mother will be your mother, too. Come, Bella, we will go ask her if we may go."

And there I am, the happiest of boys, pleading with the kindest of mothers. And the young heart leans into that mother's heart—none of the void now that will overtake it in the years that are to come. It is joyous, full, and running over!

"You may go," she says, "if your uncle is willing."

"But mamma, I am afraid to ask him; I do not believe he loves me."

"Don't say so, Paul," and she draws you to her side; as if she would supply by her own love the lacking love of a universe.

"Go, with your cousin Isabel, and ask him kindly; and if he says no—make no reply."

And with courage, we go hand in hand, and steal in at the library door. There he sits—I seem to see him now—in the old wainscoted room, covered over with books and pictures; and he wears his heavy-rimmed spectacles, and is poring over some big volume, full of hard words, that are not in any spelling-book.

We step up softly; and Isabel lays her little hand upon his arm; and he turns, and says—"Well, my little daughter?"

I ask if we may go down to the big rock in the meadow?

He looks at Isabel, and says he is afraid—"we cannot go."

"But why, uncle? It is only a little way, and we will be very careful."

"I am afraid, my children; do not say any more: you can have the pony, and Tray, and play at home."

"But, uncle——"

"You need say no more, my child."

I pinch the hand of little Isabel, and look in her eye—my own half filling with tears. I feel that my forehead is flushed, and I hide it behind Bella's tresses—whispering to her at the same time—"Let us go."

"What, sir," says my uncle, mistaking my meaning—"do you persuade her to disobey?"

Now I am angry, and say blindly—"No, sir, I didn't!" And then my rising pride will not let me say, that I wished only Isabel should go out with me.

Bella cries; and I shrink out; and am not easy until I have run to bury my head in my mother's bosom. Alas! pride cannot always find such covert! There will be times when it will harass you strangely; when it will peril friendships—will sever old, standing intimacy; and then—no resource but to feed on its own bitterness. Hateful pride!—to be conquered, as a man would conquer an enemy, or it will make whirlpools in the current of your affections—nay, turn the whole tide of the heart into rough and unaccustomed channels.

But boyhood has its GRIEF too, apart from PRIDE.

You love the old dog, Tray; and Bella loves him as well as you. He is a noble old fellow, with shaggy hair, and long ears, and big paws, that he will put up into your hands, if you ask him. And he never gets angry when you play with him, and tumble him over in the long grass, and pull his silken ears. Sometimes, to be sure, he will open his mouth, as if he would bite, but when he gets your hand fairly in his jaws, he will scarce leave the print of his teeth upon it. He will swim, too, bravely, and bring ashore all the sticks you throw upon the water; and when you fling a stone to tease him, he swims round and round, and whines, and looks sorry, that he cannot find it.

He will carry a heaping basket full of nuts, too, in his mouth, and never spill one of them; and when you come out to your uncle's home in the spring, after staying a whole winter in the town, he knows you—old Tray does! And he leaps upon you, and lays his paws on your shoulder, and licks your face; and is almost as glad to see you, as cousin Bella herself. And when you put Bella on his back for a ride, he only pretends to bite her little feet—but he wouldn't do it for the world. Ay, Tray is a noble old dog!

But one summer, the farmers say that some of their sheep are killed, and that the dogs have worried them; and one of them comes to talk with my uncle about it.

But Tray never worried sheep; you know he never did; and so does nurse; and so does Bella; for in the spring, she had a pet lamb, and Tray never worried little Fidele.

And one or two of the dogs that belong to the neighbors are shot; though nobody knows who shot them; and you have great fears about poor Tray; and try to keep him at home, and fondle him more than ever. But Tray will sometimes wander off; till finally, one afternoon, he comes back whining piteously, and with his shoulder all bloody.

Little Bella cries loud; and you almost cry, as nurse dresses the wound; and poor old Tray whines very sadly. You pat his head, and Bella pats him; and you sit down together by him on the floor of the porch, and bring a rug for him to lie upon; and try and tempt him with a little milk, and Bella brings a piece of cake for him—but he will eat nothing. You sit up till very late, long after Bella has gone to bed, patting his head, and wishing you could do something for poor Tray; but he only licks your hand, and whines more piteously than ever.

In the morning, you dress early, and hurry downstairs; but Tray is not lying on the rug; and you run through the house to find him, and whistle, and call—Tray—Tray! At length you see him lying in his old place, out by the cherry tree, and you run to him; but he does not start; and you lean down to pat him—but he is cold, and the dew is wet upon him—poor Tray is dead!

You take his head upon your knees, and pat again those glossy ears, and cry; but you cannot bring him to life. And Bella comes, and cries with you. You can hardly bear to have him put in the ground; but uncle says he must be buried. So one of the workmen digs a grave under the cherry tree, where he died—a deep grave, and they round it over with earth, and smooth the sods upon it—even now I can trace Tray's grave.

POOR TRAY IS DEAD

You and Bella together put up a little slab for a tombstone; and she hangs flowers upon it, and ties them there with a bit of ribbon. You can scarce play all that day; and afterward, many weeks later, when you are rambling over the fields, or lingering by the brook, throwing off sticks into the eddies, you think of old Tray's shaggy coat, and of his big paw, and of his honest eye; and the memory of your boyish grief comes upon you; and you say with tears, "Poor Tray!" And Bella too, in her sad sweet tones, says—"Poor old Tray—he is dead!"

THE BUGLE SONG

By ALFRED TENNYSON

THE splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Or echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

FROM THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

By Thomas à Kempis

OF FOLLOWING CHRIST AND DESPISING ALL WORLDLY VANITIES

OUR Lord saith: he that followeth me walketh not in darkness.

These are the words of Christ in the which we are admonished to follow his life and his manners if we would be truly enlightened and be delivered from all manner of blindness of heart. Wherefore let our chief study be upon the life of Jesus Christ.

Sublime words make not a man holy and righteous, but it is a virtuous life that maketh him dear to God.

I desire rather to know compunction than its definition. If thou knewest all the sayings of all the philosophers, what should that avail thee without charity and grace?

All other things in the world, save only to love God and serve him, are vanity of vanities and all vanity.

And it is vanity also to desire honour and for a man to lift himself on high.

And it is vanity to follow the desires of the flesh and to desire the thing for which man must afterward grievously be punished.

And it is vanity to desire a long life and to take no care to live a good life.

And it is vanity for a man to take heed only to this present life and not to see before those things that are to come.

Study therefore to withdraw thy heart from love of things visible and turn thee to things invisible.

For they that follow their senses stain their consciences and lose the grace of God.

OF A HUMBLE OPINION OF OURSELVES

Every man naturally desireth knowledge; but knowledge without love and fear of God, what availeth it?

Certainly the meek plow-man that serveth God is much better than the proud philosopher that, taking no heed of his own living, studies the course of the stars.

He that knoweth himself well is lowly in his own sight and hath no delight in man's praises.

If I knew all things that are in the world and had not charity, what should that help me before God who shall judge me according to my deeds?

Unwise is he that more attendeth to other things than to the health of his soul.

Many words fill not the soul; but a good life refresheth the mind and a pure conscience giveth a great confidence in God.

The more thou canst do and the better that thou canst do, the more grievously thou shalt be judged unless thou live holily.

Think not highly of thyself but rather acknowledge thine ignorance.

If thou wilt learn and know anything profitably, love to be unknown and to be accounted as of little worth.

OF THE TEACHING OF TRUTH

Blissful is he whom truth itself teacheth, not by figures or voices, but as it is.

What availeth great searching of dark and hidden things for the which we shall not be blamed in the judgment though we know them not?

He to whom the Word Everlasting speaketh is delivered from a multitude of opinions. Of one Word came all things, and all things speak one word; that is the Beginning that speaketh to us. No man without the Word understandeth or judgeth righteously.

He to whom all things are one and who draweth all things to one and seeth all things in one may be quiet in heart and peaceably abide in God.

O God of truth, make me one with thee in everlasting love!

Ofttimes it wearieth me to hear and read many things; in thee Lord is all that I wish and can desire.

Let all teachers hold their peace and all manner of creatures keep their silence in thy sight: Speak thou alone to me!

Who hath a stronger battle than he that useth force to overcome himself? This should be our occupation, to overcome ourselves and every day to be stronger and somewhat holier.

Meek knowing of thyself is more acceptable to God than deep inquiry after knowledge.

Knowledge or bare and simple knowing of things is not to be blamed, the which, in itself considered, is good and ordained of God: but a good conscience and a virtuous life is ever to be preferred.

And forasmuch as many people study more to have knowledge than to live well, therefore ofttimes they err and bring forth little fruit or none.

Certainly at the day of doom it shall not be asked of us what we have read but what we have done; nor what good we have spoken but how religiously we have lived.

Verily he is great that in himself is little and meek and setteth at naught all height of honour. Verily he is great that hath great love. Verily he is prudent that deemeth all earthly things foul so that he may win Christ. And he is verily well learned that doth the will of God and forsaketh his own will.

OF WISDOM IN MAN'S ACTIONS

It is not fit to give credence to every word nor to every suggestion, but every thing is to be weighed according to God, warily and in leisure.

Alas, rather is evil believed of another man than good; we are so weak.

But the perfect believe not easily all things that men tell, for they know man's infirmity, ready to speak evil and careless enough in words.

Hereto it belongeth also not to believe every man's words, nor to tell other men what we hear or carelessly believe.

Have thy counsel with a wise man and a man of conscience and seek rather to be taught by thy betters than to follow thine own inventions.

Good life maketh a man wise in God's sight and expert in many things.

The more meek that a man is and the more subject to God the more wise shall he be in all things—and the more patient.

OF READING THE SCRIPTURES

Truth is to be sought in holy writings, not in eloquence. Every holy writing ought to be read with the same spirit wherewith it was made.

We ought in Scriptures rather to seek profitableness than subtle language.

We ought as gladly to read simple and devout books as high and profound ones.

Let not the authority of him that writeth, whether he be of great name or little, change thy thought, but let the love of pure truth draw thee to read.

Ask not who said this, but take heed what is said. Man passeth, but the truth of the Lord abideth everlastingly.

God speaketh to us in diverse ways without respect to persons.

If thou wilt draw profit in reading, read meekly, simply and truly, not desiring to have a reputation for knowledge.

OF INORDINATE AFFECTIONS

Whenever a man coveteth anything inordinately, anon is he disquieted in himself.

The proud man and covetous hath never rest: the poor and the meek in spirit dwell in peace.

The man that is not perfectly dead to himself is soon tempted and soon overcome by small things and things of little price.

In withstanding passions and not in serving them, standeth peace of heart.

There is no peace in the heart of the carnal man nor in him that is all given to outward things; but in the fervent, spiritual man is peace.

OF SHUNNING TOO GREAT FAMILIARITY

Show not thy heart to every man but bring thy cause to him that is wise and feareth God.

Converse rarely with young people and strangers.

Flatter not rich men and seek not great men; but keep company thyself with meek and simple men and talk of such things as will edify.

Be not familiar to any woman; but generally commend all good women to God.

Desire to be familiar with God and with his angels and avoid knowledge of men. Love is to be given to all men, but familiarity is not expedient.

It happeneth some times that a person unknown shineth by his bright fame, whose presence offendeth and maketh dark the eyes of the beholders. We often hope to please others by our being and living with them, but often we displease them through the bad manners they find in us.

OF SHUNNING MANY WORDS

Avoid noise and the press of men as much as thou mayest: for talking of worldly deeds, though they be brought forth with true and simple intention, hindereth much: for we be soon defiled and led into vanity.

I have wished myself ofttimes to have held my peace and not to have been among men. Why speak we and talk we together so gladly, since seldom we come home without hurting of conscience?

We talk so oft together because by such speaking we seek comfort each from the other and to relieve the heart that is made weary with many thoughts; and we speak much of such things as we love or desire or such things as we dislike. But, alas, it is ofttimes vainly and fruitlessly, for such outward comfort is a great hindering to inward and heavenly consolation. Therefore we ought to watch and pray that our time pass not idly by.

OF FLEEING FROM VAIN HOPE AND ELATION

He is vain that putteth his hope in men or in other created things.

Be not ashamed to serve other men for the love of Jesus Christ and to be considered poor in this world. Stand not upon thyself but set thy trust in God. Do what in thee is and God shall be nigh to thy good will.

Trust not in thine own knowledge nor in the skill of any man living; but rather in the grace of God that helpeth meek folk and maketh low them that are proud.

Rejoice thee not in riches if thou have any, nor in friends if they be mighty; but in God that giveth all things and above all things desireth to give Himself.

Rejoice not for thy greatness nor for the beauty of that body which is corrupted and disfigured with a little sickness.

Please not thyself for thy ability or for thy wit lest thou displease God of whom cometh all the good that thou hast naturally.

Account not thyself better than others, lest peradventure thou be held worse in the sight of God that knoweth what is in man.

Be not proud of good works; for God's judgments are otherwise than thine. Ofttimes what pleaseth man displeaseth God.

If thou hast any good things in thee believe better things of others that thou mayest keep thy humility.

It hurteth thee not to be set under all men: it might hinder thee if thou settest thyself afore others.

Continual peace is with the meek man, but in the heart of the proud man are often envy and indignation.

Thomas à Kempis was born in the latter part of the fourteenth century and lived to a good old age. His name in full was Thomas Haemercken, but as he was born in the town of Kempen he has been generally known by the title above given. The *Imitation* was written slowly, a little at a time, and as the result of reading, reflection and prayer.

The very brief selections given above are condensed from the first ten chapters of the first book. While in the main following the best translation of the original, the language has been simplified in a few places.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

By LORD BYRON

NOTE.—Byron takes for granted his readers' knowledge of the events with which this poem deals; that is, he does not tell the whole story. Indeed, he gives us very few facts. Is there, for instance, in the poem any hint as to who Sennacherib was, or as to who the enemy was that the Assyrians came against? But if we turn to the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of *Second Kings*, we shall find the whole account of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, and his expedition against the Hebrew people. The climax of the story, with which this poem deals, is to be found in *Second Kings*, XIX, 35.

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold,
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider, distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur[1] are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal,[2]
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

[1] *Ashur* is the Assyrian form of our word *Assyria*.

[2] Baal was the chief god of the Assyrians.

RUTH

Note.—This charming story may be found complete in the book of *Ruth* in the Old Testament by those who wish the literal Bible narrative as it is there given.

Little is known as to the date of the writing of the book of *Ruth*. Some authorities believe that it was written earlier than 500 B. C., while others contend that it was not written until much later. As to the purpose, also, there are differences of opinion; is the book merely a religious romance, told to point a moral, or is it an historical narrative meant to give information as to the ancestry of David? Whichever is true, the story is a delightful one, and we enjoy reading it just as we do any other story, apart from its Biblical interest.

I

NOW it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled in Judah that there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife and his two sons. Together they came into the land and continued there; but the man died, and the wife was left, and her two sons.

And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth; and they dwelled there about ten years. Then the two sons died also both of them; and the woman, Naomi, their mother, alone was left of the family that came into Moab.

Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab; for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread.

Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

But Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest again, each in the house of her husband."

Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voices and wept, and said unto her, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people."

Naomi said, "Turn again, my daughters, why will you go with me? Have I yet any more sons that may be your husbands? Nay, it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me. Turn again my daughters; go your way."

Again they lifted up their voice and wept, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her.

Naomi said, "Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods; return thou after thy sister-in-law."

And Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

When Naomi saw that Ruth was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem.

"WHITHER THOU GOEST, I WILL GO"

There it came to pass that all the city was moved about them, and the people said, "Is this Naomi?"

"Call me not Naomi," she said unto them. "Call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.[1] I went out full and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?"

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

II

NAOMI had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth; and his name was Boaz.

And Ruth said unto Naomi, "Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace." And Naomi answered, "Go, my daughter."

And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz.

And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said unto the reapers, "The Lord be with you."

And the reapers answered him, "The Lord bless thee." Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, "Whose damsel is this?"

And the servant answered and said, "It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab. And she said, 'I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves': so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house."

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[1] *Naomi* means *pleasant*, while *Mara* means *bitter*.

Boaz said unto Ruth, "Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens. Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn."

RUTH GLEANING

Then she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

And Boaz answered and said unto her, "It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

Then she said, "Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens."

And Boaz said unto her, "At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread and dip thy morsel in the vinegar."

And she sat beside the reapers; and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed and left.

And when she was risen up to glean again, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves and reproach her not; and let fall also some handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them that she may glean them, and rebuke her not."

So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah[2] of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned.

And her mother-in-law said unto her, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee."

And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, "The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz."

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[2] The *ephah* was equal to about two pecks and five quarts.

And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead." And Naomi said unto her, "The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen."

And Ruth the Moabitess said, "He said unto me also, 'Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.' "

And Naomi said unto Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field."

So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

III

THEN Naomi, her mother-in-law, said unto Ruth, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing floor. Wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee and get thee down to the floor, and he will tell thee what to do."

And Ruth said, "All that thou sayest unto me, that will I do."

Therefore went she down unto the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her. And Boaz saw her and loved her and asked her, "Who art thou?"

She answered, "I am Ruth, thy handmaid."

And Boaz said, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter, and fear not, for all the city of my people doth know thou art a virtuous woman. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit, there is a kinsman nearer than I. Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part. But if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of the kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth. Bring now the vail that thou hast upon thee and hold it."

And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her, and she returned into the city.

When now she came to her mother, Naomi asked, "Who art thou?" And Ruth told her all that the man had said and done, and said, "These six measures of barley gave he me, for he said to me, 'Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.' "

Then said Naomi, "Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall; for the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day."

IV

THEN went Boaz up to the gate and sat him down there; and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spoke, came by; unto whom Boaz said, "Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down.

And Boaz took also ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit ye down here." And they sat down.

Then said Boaz unto the kinsman, "Naomi, that is come again out of the land of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother's. And I thought to ask thee to buy it before the inhabitants and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee, and I am after thee. And what day thou buyest it of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead."

And the kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance; redeem thou my right to thyself: for I cannot redeem it."

Now this was the manner in former time in Israel, concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things: a man plucked off his shoe and gave it to his neighbor; and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, "Buy it for thee." So he drew off his shoe.

And Boaz said unto the elders and all the people, "Ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Naomi's husband's and all that was her son's of the hand of Naomi. Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of my kinsman that is dead, have I purchased to be my wife, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day."

And all the people that were there in the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily and be famous in Bethlehem."

So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife, and she bare him a son. And the women said unto Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord that hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him."

And Naomi took the child and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women, her neighbors, gave it a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi, and his name is Obed."

This same Obed is the father of Jesse, who is the father of David.

THE VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

By Lord Byron

Note.—According to the account given in the fifth chapter of *Daniel*, Belshazzar was the last king of Babylon, and the son of the great king Nebuchadnezzar, who had destroyed Jerusalem and taken the Jewish people captive to Babylon. The dramatic incident with which the second stanza of Byron's poem deals is thus described:

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote."

After all the Babylonian wise men had tried in vain to read the writing, the "captive in the land," Daniel, was sent for, and he interpreted the mystery.

"And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

"This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

"TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

"PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

The fulfillment of the prophecy thus declared by Daniel is described thus briefly: "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom."

THE King was on his throne,
  The Satraps[1] throng'd the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone
  O'er that high festival.

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[1] The satraps were the governors of the provinces, who ruled under the king and were accountable to him.

A thousand cups of gold,
  In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels hold[2]
  The godless Heathen's wine.

In that same hour and hall
  The fingers of a Hand
Came forth against the wall,
  And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
  A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
  And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
  And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
  And tremulous his voice:—
"Let the men of lore appear,
  The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
  Which mar our royal mirth."

Chaldea's[3] seers are good,
  But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
  Untold and awful still.
And Babel's[4] men of age
  Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
  They saw—but knew no more.

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2. These were the sacred "vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem."

3. The terms *Chaldea* and *Babylonia* were used practically synonymously.

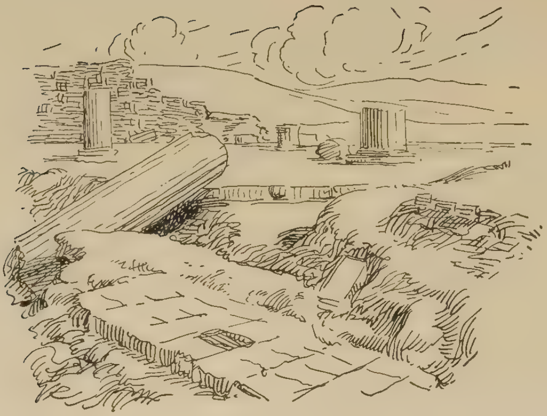
4. *Babel* is a shortened form of *Babylon*.

A Captive in the land,
  A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
  He saw that writing's truth;

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

The lamps around were bright,
  The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night,—
  The morrow proved it true!

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He, in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay;
The shroud, his robe of state;
His canopy, the stone:
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!"



SOHRAB AND RUSTEM

RUSTEM

THE Persians have a great epic which is to them about what the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were to the Greeks and the *Æneid* was to the Romans. In character, however, the Persian epic is more like the English narrative *Morte d' Arthur,* from which readings will be found elsewhere in these volumes. This wonderful poem, the *Shah Nameh,* relates exploits of the Shahs of Persia for a period that is supposed to extend over more than three thousand years. It was written by Firdusi, a famous Persian poet, toward the close of the tenth century, and is filled with tales of the marvelous adventures and stirring achievements of national heroes. Fierce monsters like those that appear in the legendary tales of all nations stalk through its pages, and magicians, good and bad, work their enchantments for and against the devoted Persians. The imagination of Eastern writers is more vivid than that of the Europeans, and for that reason the stories are more full of thrilling episodes and supernatural occurrences.

Chief among the heroes is Rustem, who seems to have lived through many centuries, and to have been the one great defender of the Persian throne. From the cradle he was marked for renown, for he was larger, stronger and healthier than any other babe that was ever born. His mother alone could not feed him, and ten nurses were required to satisfy the infant's hunger. His father, Zal, the white-haired, looked with pride upon his growing son, who as soon as he was weaned fell upon bread and meat as his only diet and required as much of them as would feed five ordinary men. Such a child ought to make a wonderful man, and this one fulfilled the highest hopes of his parents, for he became taller in stature, broader in shoulders, deeper in the chest and stronger in all his muscles than any other man the Persian race had ever known.

His childish exploits were quite as wonderful as those of his later years. One night he was awakened from his slumbers by hearing the servants say that the great white elephant on which his father rode on state occasions had broken loose and was running about the royal gardens, mad with rage, pulling up the trees, tearing down buildings and killing every one that came in his way. Not a man dared stand against the fierce beast, and though the archers had tried again and again their weapons had no effect upon him.

Rustem rose from his couch, put on his clothes, caught from the wall the huge club his grandfather had owned, and made for the door of his chamber.

"Where are you going? What will you do?" cried the frightened servants.

"Open the door. I must stop that elephant before he does greater damage," answered the boy.

One of his serving men, braver than the rest, opposed the boy. "I dare not obey you," said the man; "your father would never forgive me if I let you go forth to be slain by that ferocious beast whose broken chains clank about his legs and whose huge trunk brings destruction to everything it strikes. You will be knocked down and trampled to death. This is pure folly!"

"Out of my way," cried the enraged Rustem. "You rush upon your own doom."

Almost blind with anger, the furious youth swung his club about him and struck the faithful servant so fearful a blow that his head was knocked from his body and rolled along the floor like a huge ball. The other servants fled to the corners of the room and gave Rustem a clear path. One blow from his great club broke the iron balls from the door and sent it flying from its hinges. Shouldering his club Rustem hurried into the garden, where he soon found the maddened elephant in the midst of the ruin he was making. When the unwieldy animal saw the boy approaching it rushed at him with savage bellowings, swinging its long, powerful trunk from side to side in great circles. The terrible spectacle frightened Rustem not in the least, and the dauntless youth rushed forward and struck the elephant a single blow full in its forehead. The great legs trembled and bent, the huge body tottered and fell, making a mountain of quivering flesh. Rustem calmly shouldered his club, returned to his chamber, and finished his sleep.

As Rustem grew to manhood he became the owner of a great horse little less wonderful than his master. Raksh, for that was the animal's name, not only carried Rustem in war and in the chase, but he fought for his master in every conflict, watched over him in his sleep, and defended him with human intelligence. On one of his expeditions Rustem lay down to sleep near the den of a lion, that as he came forth to hunt at night saw the horse and rider asleep before him. The lion, knowing that if he could kill the horse the man would not get away, made ready to spring upon Raksh, but that wary animal was sleeping with one eye open and met the leaping lion more than half way with two great hoofs planted squarely in his face. Before the astonished animal could recover his senses Raksh seized him by the back and beat his life out upon the ground.

Of Rustem's countless struggles with dragons, witches, genii and other strange beings, and of the wonderful battles by which he defended the throne of Persia, we cannot stop to read. They were all very similar in one respect at least, for always he escaped from deadly peril by his own wisdom and strength, aided often, as we have said, by Raksh. But there is one part of his life, one series of more than human adventures that we ought to know.

One day Rustem was hunting over a plain on the borders of Tartary when he discovered a large herd of wild asses. No animal could outstrip Raksh, and so his master was soon among the herd, killing the animals to right and left. Some he slew with the arrows of his strong bow, others he lassoed and killed with his trusty club. When his love for hunting was satisfied he built a fire, roasted one of the asses and prepared for a great feast. In time even his sharp appetite was quenched, and lying down upon his blanket he was soon buried in a sound slumber.

As he slept Raksh wandered about the plains quietly feeding. Without noticing it he strayed far away from his master, and in fact quite out of sight.

Then it happened that seven Tartars who had been following Raksh made a dash at him and tried to capture him with their lassoes. The noble horse fought them manfully, killing two of them with the blows of his forefeet and biting the head from the shoulders of another. But the ropes from the lassoes became tangled with his legs, and even the marvelous Raksh was at last thrown, overpowered and led struggling away.

When Rustem awoke his first thought was for his horse, but though he looked everywhere the faithful animal was not in sight. Such a thing had never happened before, and Rustem grew pale with sorrow and dread.

"What can I do without my noble charger?" he said. "How can I carry my arrows, club and other weapons? How can I defend myself? Moreover, I shall be the laughingstock of friends and enemies alike, for all will say that in my carelessnesss I slept and allowed my horse to be stolen."

At last he discovered the tracks of Raksh in the dust of the plain, and following them with difficulty he found himself at the town of Samengan. The king and nobles of the town knew Rustem, but seemed surprised to see him come walking. The wanderer explained what had happened, and the wily monarch answered, "Have no fear, noble Rustem. Every one knows your wonderful horse Raksh, and soon some one will come and bring him to you. I will even send many men to search for him. In the meantime, rest with us and be happy. We will entertain you with the best, and in pleasure you will forget your loss till Raksh is returned to you."

This plan pleased Rustem, and the king kept his word in royal entertainments in which he served his guest with grave humility. Moreover, the princess Tehmina likewise served Rustem with becoming grace and dignity. No maiden was ever more beautiful. She was tall as the cypress and as graceful as a gazelle. Her neck and shoulders were like ivory; her hair, black and shiny as a raven's wings, hung in two long braids down her back, as the Persian horseman loops his lasso to his saddle bow; her lips were like twin rubies, and her black brilliant eyes glanced from highly-arched eye-brows.

Rustem fell deeply in love with the fair maiden as soon as he saw her, and at the first opportunity told her of his affection. Tehmina then confessed that she had long loved Rustem from the reports she had heard of his noble character and deeds of great prowess. The capture of Raksh was a part of her plan for meeting the owner, for she felt sure he would follow the animal's track to her father's capital. All this served to make more strong the love of Rustem, who immediately demanded of the king his daughter's hand in marriage. The king, glad enough to have so powerful a man for his son, consented willingly to the match, and after they were married amid great rejoicings, Rustem settled down at the court in quiet enjoyment of his new-found home.

A powerful man like Rustem cannot always remain in idleness, however, and when news came to him that the Persian king was in need of his greatest warrior, Rustem took his lasso, his bow and arrows and his club, mounted Raksh and rode away. Before going, however, he took from his arm an onyx bracelet that had been his father's, and calling Tehmina to him handed it to her, saying:

"Take this bracelet, my dear one, and keep it. If we have a child and it be a girl, weave the bracelet in her hair and she will grow tall, beautiful and good; if our child be a boy, fasten the bracelet on his arm, and he will become strong and courageous, a mighty warrior and a wise counsellor."

SOHRAB

WHEN Rustem had gone Tehmina wept bitterly, but consoled herself with the thought that her husband would soon return. After her child was born, she devoted herself to the wonderful boy and waited patiently for the father that never returned. She remembered the parting words of Rustem, and fastened upon the arm of her infant son the magic bracelet of his race.

He was a marvelous boy, this son of Rustem and Tehmina. Beautiful in face as the moon when it rides the heavens in its fullness, he was large, well-formed, with limbs as straight as the arrows of his father. He grew at an astonishing rate. When he was but a month old he was as tall as any year-old baby; at three years of age he could use the bow, the lasso and the club with the skill of a man; at five he was as brave as a lion, and at ten not a man in the kingdom was his match in strength and agility.

Tehmina, rejoicing in the intelligent, shining face of her boy, had named him Sohrab, but as she feared that Rustem might send for his son if he knew that he had so promising a one, she sent word to her husband that her child was a girl. Disappointed in this, Rustem paid no attention to his offspring, who grew up unknown to his parent, and himself ignorant of the name of his father.

When Sohrab was about ten years old he began to notice that, unlike the other young men, he seemed to have no father. Accordingly he went to his mother and questioned her.

"What shall I say," he inquired, "when the young men ask me who is my father? Must I always tell them that I do not know? Whose son am I?"

"My son, you ask and you have a right to know. You need feel no shame because of your father. He is the mighty Rustem, the greatest of Persian warriors, the noblest man that ever lived. But I beg you to tell no one lest word should come to Rustem, for I know he would take you from me and I should never see you again."

Sohrab was overjoyed to hear of his noble parentage and felt his heart swell with pride, for he had heard all his life of the heroic deeds of his father.

"Such a thing as this cannot be kept secret," he cried. "Sooner or later every one in the world will know that I am Rustem's son. But not now will we tell the tale. I will gather a great army of Tartars and make war upon Kaoos, the Persian king. When I have defeated him I will set my father Rustem upon the throne, and then I will overthrow Afrasiab, King of the Turanians, and take his throne myself. There is room in the world for but two kings, my father Rustem and myself."

The youthful warrior began his preparations immediately. First he sought far and wide for a horse worthy to carry him, and at last succeeded in finding a noble animal of the same breed as the famous Raksh. Mounted on this splendid steed he rode about and rapidly collected an army of devoted followers.

The noise of these preparations spread abroad and soon came to the ears of Afrasiab, who saw in this war an opportunity for profit to himself and humiliation for Kaoos. Accordingly, he sent offers of assistance to Sohrab, who accepted them willingly and received among his followers the hosts of the Turanian king.

But Afrasiab was a wily monarch, and sent to Sohrab two astute counsellors, Haman and Barman with instructions to watch the young leader carefully and to keep from him all knowledge of his father.

"If possible," said the treacherous monarch, "bring the two together and let them fight, neither knowing who the other is. Then may Sohrab slay his mighty father and we be left to rule the youthful and inexperienced son by our superior cunning and wisdom. If on the other hand Rustem shall slay his son, his heart will fail him, and he will die in despair."

When the army was fully in readiness Sohrab set forth against Persia. In his way lay the great White Fort whose chief defender was the mighty Hujir. The Persians felt only contempt for the boyish leader and had no fear of his great army. As they approached, Hujir rode forth to meet them and called aloud in derision.

"Let the mighty Sohrab come forth to meet me alone. I will slay him with ease and give his body to the vultures for food."

Undismayed by these threats Sohrab met the doughty Persian and unhorsed him in the first encounter. Springing from his horse Sohrab raised his sword to strike, but the Persian begged so lustily for quarter that he was granted his life, though sent a prisoner to the king.

Among those who watched the defeat of Hujir was Gurdafrid, the daughter of the old governor of the White Fort. She was stronger than any warrior in the land and fully accustomed to the use of arms. When she became aware that Hujir was indeed vanquished she hastily clothed herself in full armor, thrust her long hair under her helmet and rode gallantly out to meet Sohrab. The girl shot a perfect shower of arrows at Sohrab, but all glanced harmlessly from his armor. Seeing that she could not find a weak spot in his mail she put her shield in rest and charged valiantly at her foe. However, she was no match for her antagonist and was borne from her saddle by the fierce lance of her enemy. As she fell, however, she drew her sword and severed the spear of Sohrab. Before he could change weapons she had mounted her horse and was galloping wildly toward the fort with her late antagonist in full pursuit. Long ere the castle walls were reached Sohrab overtook her and seized her by the helmet, when its fastenings gave way and her long hair fell about her shoulders, disclosing the fact that he had been fighting with a woman.

Struck by the beauty of the girl and ashamed that he had been fighting with her, Sohrab released her after she had promised that she would make no further resistance and that the castle would surrender at his approach. The fierce Gurdafrid, however, had no idea of giving up the fort, but as soon as she was within, the gates were closed, and she, mounting upon the walls, jeered at the waiting Sohrab.

"It is now too late to fight, but when morning comes I will level your fort to the earth and leave not one stone upon the other." With these words the incensed warrior galloped back to his camp. When in the morning he marched his army against the fort he found that his prey had escaped, for during the night Gurdafrid had led the whole garrison out through a secret passage and had gone to warn King Kaoos of the approach of the mighty Sohrab and his powerful army. The allied Tartars and Turanians followed as rapidly as they might, but it was some time before they could come anywhere near the Persian capital.

What was happening in Persia has been very well told by Alfred J. Church in his story of Sohrab and Rustem:

"When King Kaoos heard that there had appeared among the Tartars a mighty champion, against whom, such was the strength of his arms, no one could stand; how he had overthrown and taken their champion and now threatened to overrun and conquer the whole land of Persia, he was greatly troubled, and calling a scribe, said to him, 'Sit down and write a letter to Rustem.'

"So the scribe sat down and wrote. The letter was this: 'There has appeared among the Tartars a great champion, strong as an elephant and as fierce as a lion. No one can stand against him. We look to you for help. It is of your doing that our warriors hold their heads so high. Come, then, with all the speed that you can use, so soon as you shall have read this letter. Be it night or day, come at once; do not open your mouth to speak; if you have a bunch of roses in your hand do not stop to smell it, but come; for the warrior of whom I write is such that you only can meet him.'

"King Kaoos sealed the letter and gave it to a warrior named Giv. At the same time he said, 'Haste to Rustem. Tarry not on the way; and when you are come, do not rest there for an hour. If you arrive in the night, depart again the next morning.'

"So Giv departed, and traveled with all his speed, allowing himself neither sleep nor food. When he approached Zabulistan, the watchman said, 'A warrior comes from Persia riding like the wind.' So Rustem, with his chiefs, went out to meet him. When they had greeted each other, they returned together to Rustem's palace.

"Giv delivered his message, and handed the king's letter, telling himself much more that he had heard about the strength and courage of this Tartar warrior. Rustem heard him with astonishment, and said, 'This champion is like, you say, to the great Sam, my grandfather. That such a man should come from the free Persians is possible; but that he should be among those slaves the Tartars, is past belief. I have myself a child, whom the daughter of a Tartar king bore to me; but the child is a girl. This, then, that you tell me is passing strange; but for the present let us make merry.'

"So they made merry with the chiefs that were assembled in Rustem's palace. But after a while Giv said again: 'King Kaoos commanded me, saying, "You must not sleep in Zabulistan; if you arrive in the night, set out again the next morning. It will go ill with us if we have to fight before Rustem comes." It is necessary, then, great hero, that we set out in all haste for Persia.'

"Rustem said, 'Do not trouble yourself about this matter. We must all die some day. Let us, therefore, enjoy the present. Our lips are dry, let us wet them with wine. As to this Tartar, fortune will not always be with him. When he sees my standard, his heart will fail him.'

"So they sat, drinking the red wine and singing merry songs, instead of thinking of the king and his commands. The next day Rustem passed in the same fashion, and the third also. But on the fourth Giv made preparations to depart, saying to Rustem, 'If we do not make haste to set out, the king will be wroth, and his anger is terrible.'

"Rustem said, 'Do not trouble yourself; no man dares to be wroth with me.' Nevertheless, he bade them saddle Raksh and set out with his companions.

"When they came near the king's palace, a great company of nobles rode out to meet them, and conducted them to the king, and they paid their homage to him. But the king turned away from them in a rage. 'Who is Rustem,' he cried, 'that he forgets his duty to me, and disobeys my commands? If I had a sword in my hand this moment, I would cut off his head, as a man cuts an orange in half. Take him, hang him up alive on gallows, and never mention his name again in my presence.'

"Giv answered, 'Sir, will you lay hands upon Rustem?' The king burst out again in rage against Giv and Rustem, crying to one of his nobles, 'Take these two villains and hang them alive on gallows.' And he rose up from his throne in fury.

"The noble to whom he had spoken laid his hand upon Rustem, wishing to lead him out of the king's presence, lest Kaoos in his rage should do him an injury. But Rustem cried out, 'What a king are you! Hang this Tartar, if you can, on your gallows. Keep such things for your enemies. All the world has bowed itself before me and Raksh, my horse. And you—you are king by my grace.'

"Thus speaking, he struck away the hand that the noble had laid upon him so fiercely that the man fell headlong to the ground, and he passed over his body to go from the presence of the king. And as he mounted on Raksh, he cried: 'What is Kaoos that he should deal with me in this fashion? It is God who has given me strength and victory, and not he or his army. The nobles would have given me the throne of Persia long since, but I would not receive it; I kept the right before my eyes. Verily, had I not done so, you, Kaoos, would not be sitting upon the throne.' Then he turned to the Persians that stood by, and said, 'This brave Tartar will come. Look out for yourselves how you may save your lives. Me you shall see no more in the land of Persia.'

"The Persians were greatly troubled to hear such words; for they were sheep, and Rustem was their shepherd. So the nobles assembled, and said to each other: 'The king has forgotten all gratitude and decency. Does he not remember that he owes to Rustem his throne—nay, his very life? If the gallows be Rustem's reward, what shall become of us?'

"So the oldest among them came and stood before the king, and said: 'O king, have you forgotten what Rustem has done for you and this land—how he conquered Mazanieran and its king and the White Genius; how he gave you back the sight of your eyes? And now you have commanded that he shall be hanged alive upon a gallows. Are these fitting words for a king?'

"The king listened to the old man, and said: 'You speak well. The words of a king should be words of wisdom. Go now to Rustem, and speak good words to him, and make him forget my anger.'

"So the old man rode after Rustem, and many of the nobles went with him. When they had overtaken him, the old man said, 'You know that the king is a wrathful man, and that in his rage he speaks hard words. But you know also that he soon repents. But now he is ashamed of what he said. And if he has offended, yet the Persians have done no wrong that you should thus desert them.'

"Rustem answered, 'Who is the king that I should care for him? My saddle is my throne and my helmet is my crown, my corselet is my robe of state. What is the king to me but a grain of dust? Why should I fear his anger? I delivered him from prison; I gave him back his crown. And now my patience is at an end.'

"The old man said, 'This is well. But the king and his nobles will think, "Rustem fears this Tartar," and they will say, "If Rustem is afraid, what can we do but leave our country?" I pray you therefore not to turn your back upon the king, when things are in such a plight. Is it well that the Persians should become the slaves of the infidel Tartars?'

"Rustem stood confounded to hear such words. 'If there were fear in my heart, then I would tear my soul from my body. But you know that it is not; only the king has treated me with scorn.'

"But he perceived that he must yield to the old man's advice. So he went back with the nobles.

"As soon as the king saw him, he leaped upon his feet, and said, 'I am hard of soul, but a man must grow as God has made him. My heart was troubled by the fear of this new enemy. I looked to you for safety, and you delayed your coming. Then I spoke in my wrath; but I have repented, and my mouth is full of dust.'

"Rustem said, "It is yours to command, O king, and ours to obey. You are the master, and we are the slaves. I am but as one of those who open the door for you, if indeed I am worthy to be reckoned among them. And now I come to execute your commands.'

"Kaoos said, 'It is well. Now let us feast. To-morrow we will prepare for war.'

"So Kaoos, and Rustem, and the nobles feasted till the night had passed and the morning came. The next day King Kaoos and Rustem, with a great army, began their march."

Matthew Arnold, the great English critic, scholar and poet, has used the incidents that follow as the subject of one of his most interesting poems. To that poem we will look for a continuation of the story. Arnold alters the story at times to suit the needs of his poem, and he often employs a slightly different spelling of proper names from that used in the above account.

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

AN EPISODE

By Matthew Arnold

AND the first gray of morning fill'd the east,
And the fog rose out of the Oxus[1] stream.
But all the Tartar camp along the stream
Was hush'd, and still the men were plunged in sleep;
Sohrab alone, he slept not; all night long
He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;
But when the gray dawn stole into his tent,
He rose, and clad himself, and girt his sword,
And took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent,
And went abroad into the cold wet fog,
Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's[2] tent.
  Through the black Tartar tents he pass'd, which stood
Clustering like beehives on the low flat strand
Of Oxus, where the summer floods o'erflow
When the sun melts the snow in high Pamere;[3]

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[1] The Oxus, 1300 miles long, is the chief river of Central Asia, and one of the boundaries of Persia.

[2] Peran-Wisa was the commander of King Afrasiab's troops, a Turanian chief who ruled over the many wild Tartar tribes whose men composed his army.

[3] Pamir or Pamere is a high tableland called by the natives "the roof of the world." In it lies the source of the Oxus. Arnold has named many places for the purpose of giving an air of reality to the poem. It is not necessary to locate them accurately in order to understand the poem, and so the notes will refer to them only as the story is made clearer by the explanation.

Through the black tents he pass'd, o'er that low strand,
And to a hillock came, a little back
From the stream's brink—the spot where first a boat,
Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes the land.
The men of former times had crown'd the top
With a clay fort; but that was fall'n, and now
The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,
A dome of laths, and over it felts were spread.
And Sohrab came there, and went in, and stood
Upon the thick piled carpets in the tent,
And found the old man sleeping on his bed
Of rugs and felts, and near him lay his arms.
And Peran-Wisa heard him, though the step
Was dull'd; for he slept light, an old man's sleep;
And he rose quickly on one arm, and said:—
"Who art thou? for it is not yet clear dawn.
Speak! is there news, or any night alarm?"
But Sohrab came to the bedside, and said:—
"Thou know'st me, Peran-Wisa! it is I.
The sun is not yet risen, and the foe
Sleep; but I sleep not; all night long I lie
Tossing and wakeful, and I come to thee.
For so did King Afrasiab bid me seek
Thy counsel and to heed thee as thy son,
In Samarcand,[4] before the army march'd;
And I will tell thee what my heart desires.
Thou know'st if, since from Aber-baijan first
I came among the Tartars and bore arms,
I have still served Afrasiab well, and shown,
At my boy's years, the courage of a man.

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[4] Samarcand is a city of Turkistan, now a center of learning and of commerce.

Sohrab and Peran-Wisa

This too thou know'st, that while I still bear on
The conquering Tartar ensigns through the world,
And beat the Persians back on every field,
I seek one man, one man, and one alone—
Rustum, my father; who I hoped should greet,
Should one day greet, upon some well-fought field,
His not unworthy, not inglorious son.
So I long hoped, but him I never find.
Come then, hear now, and grant me what I ask.
Let the two armies rest to-day; but I
Will challenge forth the bravest Persian lords
To meet me man to man; if I prevail,
Rustum will surely hear it; if I fall—
Old man, the dead need no one, claim no kin.
Dim is the rumor of a common[5] fight,
Where host meets host, and many names are sunk;
But of a single combat fame speaks clear."
He spoke; and Peran-Wisa took the hand
Of the young man in his, and sigh'd, and said:—
"O Sohrab, an unquiet heart is thine!
Canst thou not rest among the Tartar chiefs,
And share the battle's common chance with us
Who love thee, but must press forever first,
In single fight incurring single risk,
To find a father thou hast never seen?
That were far best, my son, to stay with us
Unmurmuring; in our tents, while it is war,
And when 'tis truce, then in Afrasiab's towns.
But, if this one desire indeed rules all,

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5. *Common* here means *general*. The idea is that little fame comes to him who fights in a general combat in which numbers take part. What is the real reason for Sohrab's desire to fight in single combat? Arnold gives a different reason from that in the *Shah Nameh*. In the latter case it is that by defeating their champion Sohrab may frighten the Persians into submission.

To seek out Rustum—seek him not through fight!
Seek him in peace and carry to his arms,
O Sohrab, carry an unwounded son!
But far hence seek him, for he is not here.
For now it is not as when I was young,
When Rustum was in front of every fray:
But now he keeps apart, and sits at home,
In Seistan,[6] with Zal, his father old.
Whether that[7] his own mighty strength at last
Feels the abhorr'd approaches of old age,
Or in some quarrel with the Persian King.
There go!—Thou wilt not? Yet my heart forbodes
Danger or death awaits thee on this field.
Fain would I know thee safe and well, though lost
To us; fain therefore send thee hence, in peace
To seek thy father, not seek single fights
In vain;—but who can keep the lion's cub
From ravening, and who govern Rustum's son?
Go, I will grant thee what thy heart desires."
  So said he, and dropped Sohrab's hand and left
His bed, and the warm rugs whereon he lay;
And o'er his chilly limbs his woolen coat
He passed, and tied his sandals on his feet,
And threw a white cloak round him, and he took
In his right hand a ruler's staff, no sword;
And on his head he set his sheepskin cap,
Black, glossy, curl'd, the fleece of Kara-Kul;
And raised the curtain of his tent, and call'd
His herald to his side and went abroad.
  The sun by this had risen, and cleared the fog
From the broad Oxus and the glittering sands.

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[6] Seistan was the province in which Rustum and his father Zal had ruled for many years, subjects of the King of Persia.

[7] *Whether that* and *Or in* beginning the second line below may be understood to read *Either because* and *Or because of*.

And from their tents the Tartar horsemen filed
Into the open plain; so Haman bade—
Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa ruled
The host, and still was in his lusty prime.
From their black tents, long files of horse, they stream'd;
As when some gray November morn the files,
In marching order spread, of long-neck'd cranes
Stream over Casbin and the southern slopes
Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,
Or some frore[8] Caspian reed bed, southward bound
For the warm Persian seaboard—so they streamed.
The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's guard,
First, with black sheepskin caps and with long spears;
Large men, large steeds; who from Bokhara come
And Khiva, and ferment the milk of mares.[9]
Next, the more temperate Toorkmuns of the south,
The Tukas, and the lances of Salore,
And those from Attruck and the Caspian sands;
Light men and on light steeds, who only drink
The acrid milk of camels, and their wells.
And then a swarm of wandering horse, who came
From far, and a more doubtful service own'd;
The Tartars of Ferghana, from the banks
Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards
And close-set skullcaps; and those wilder hordes
Who roam o'er Kipchak and the northern waste,
Kalmucks and unkempt Kuzzacks, tribes who stray
Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kirghizzes,
Who come on shaggy ponies from Pamere;

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[8] *Frore* means *frozen.*

[9] From mares' milk is made koumiss, a favorite fermented drink of Tartar tribes.

These all filed out from camp into the plain.
And on the other side the Persians form'd;—
First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they seem'd,
The Ilyats of Khorassan; and behind,
The royal troops of Persia, horse and foot,
Marshal'd battalions bright in burnish'd steel.
But Peran-Wisa with his herald came,
Threading the Tartar squadrons to the front,
And with his staff kept back the foremost ranks.
And when Ferood, who led the Persians, saw
That Peran-Wisa kept the Tartars back,
He took his spear, and to the front he came,
And check'd his ranks, and fix'd[10] them where they stood.
And the old Tartar came upon the sand
Betwixt the silent hosts, and spake, and said:—
"Ferood, and ye, Persians and Tartars, hear!
Let there be truce between the hosts to-day,
But choose a champion from the Persian lords
To fight our champion Sohrab, man to man."
As, in the country, on a morn in June,
When the dew glistens on the pearled ears,
A shiver runs through the deep corn[11] for joy—
So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa said,
A thrill through all the Tartar squadrons ran
Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom they loved.
But as a troop of peddlers, from Cabool,
Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,
That vast sky-neighboring mountain of milk snow;
Crossing so high, that, as they mount, they pass
Long flocks of traveling birds dead on the snow,

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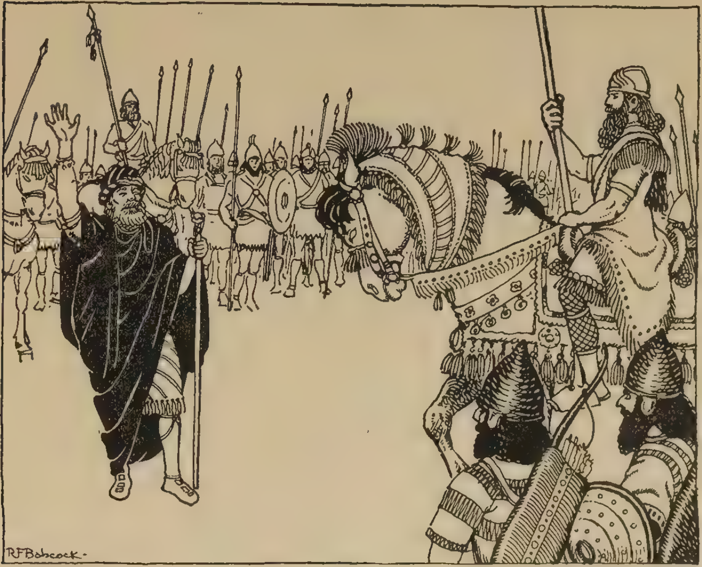
[10] *Fix'd* means *halted*. He caused his army to remain stationary while he rode forward.

[11] The *corn* is grain of some kind, not our maize or Indian corn.

Choked by the air, and scarce can they themselves
Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd mulberries—
In single file they move, and stop their breath,
For fear they should dislodge the o'erhanging snows—



PERAN-WISA GIVES SOHRAB'S CHALLENGE

So the pale Persians held their breath with fear.
And to Ferood his brother chiefs came up
To counsel; Gudurz and Zoarrah came,
And Feraburz, who ruled the Persian host
Second, and was the uncle of the King;
These came and counsel'd, and then Gudurz said:—
"Ferood, shame bids us take their challenge up,
Yet champion have we none to match this youth.
He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart.
But Rustum came last night; aloof he sits

And sullen, and has pitch'd his tents apart.
Him will I seek, and carry to his ear
The Tartar challenge, and this young man's name.
Haply he will forget his wrath, and fight.
Stand forth the while, and take their challenge up."
So spake he; and Ferood stood forth and cried:—
"Old man, be it agreed as thou hast said!
Let Sohrab arm, and we will find a man."
He spake: and Peran-Wisa turn'd, and strode
Back through the opening squadrons to his tent.
But through the anxious Persians Gudurz ran,
And cross'd the camp which lay behind, and reach'd
Out on the sand beyond it, Rustum's tents.
Of scarlet cloth they were, and glittering gay,
Just pitch'd; the high pavilion in the midst
Was Rustum's and his men lay camp'd around.
And Gudurz enter'd Rustum's tent, and found
Rustum; his morning meal was done, but still
The table stood before him, charged with food—
A side of roasted sheep, and cakes of bread,
And dark-green melons, and there Rustum sate
Listless, and held a falcon on his wrist,
And play'd with it; but Gudurz came and stood
Before him; and he look'd, and saw him stand,
And with a cry sprang up and dropped the bird,
And greeted Gudurz with both hands, and said:—
"Welcome! these eyes could see no better sight.
What news? but sit down first, and eat and drink."
But Gudurz stood in the tent door, and said:—
"Not now! a time will come to eat and drink,
But not to-day; to-day has other needs.
The armies are drawn out, and stand at gaze;
For from the Tartars is a challenge brought
To pick a champion from the Persian lords

To fight their champion—and thou know'st his
name—
Sohrab men call him, but his birth is hid.
O Rustum, like thy might is this young man's!
He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart;
And he is young, and Iran's chiefs are old,
Or else too weak; and all eyes turn to thee.
Come down and help us, Rustum, or we lose!"
He spoke; but Rustum answer'd with a smile:—
"Go to! if Iran's chiefs are old, then I
Am older; if the young are weak, the King
Errs strangely; for the King, for Kai Khosroo,[12]
Himself is young, and honors younger men,
And lets the aged molder to their graves.
Rustum he loves no more, but loves the young—
The young may rise at Sohrab's vaunts, not I.
For what care I, though all speak Sohrab's fame?
For would that I myself had such a son,
And not that one slight helpless girl I have—
A son so famed, so brave, to send to war,
And I to tarry with the snow-hair'd Zal,[13]
My father, whom the robber Afghans vex,
And clip his borders short, and drive his herds,
And he has none to guard his weak old age.

[12] Kai Khosroo was one of the Persian kings who lived in the sixth century B. C., and is now understood to be Cyrus. He was the grandson of Kai Kaoos, in whose reign the *Shah Nameh* places the episode of Sohrab and Rustum. Here as elsewhere Arnold alters the legend to suit his convenience and to make the poem more effective. For instance, he compresses the combat into a single day, while in the Persian epic, the battle lasts three days. This change gives greater vitality and more rapid action to the poem.

[13] Zal was born with snowy hair, a most unusual thing among the black-haired Persians. His father was so angered by the appearance of his son that he abandoned the innocent babe in the Elburz mountains, where, however, a great bird or griffin miraculously preserved the infant and in time returned it to its father, who had repented of his hasty action.

There would I go, and hang my armor up,
And with my great name fence that weak old man,
And spend the goodly treasures I have got,
And rest my age, and hear of Sohrab's fame,
And leave to death the hosts of thankless kings,
And with these slaughterous hands draw sword no
more."
He spoke, and smiled; and Gudruz made reply:—
"What then, O Rustum, will men say to this,
When Sohrab dares our bravest forth, and seeks
Thee most of all, and thou, whom most he seeks,
Hidest thy face? Take heed lest men should say:
'Like some old miser, Rustum hoards his fame,
And shuns to peril it with younger men,'"
And, greatly moved, then Rustum made reply:—
"O Gudurz, wherefore dost thou say such words?
Thou knowest better words than this to say.
What is one more, one less, obscure or famed,
Valiant or craven, young or old, to me?
Are not they mortal, am not I myself?
But who for men of naught would do great deeds?
Come, thou shalt see how Rustum hoards his fame!
But I will fight unknown, and in plain arms;
Let not men say of Rustum, he was match'd
In single fight with any mortal man."
He spoke, and frown'd; and Gudurz turn'd and
ran
Back quickly through the camp in fear and joy—
Fear at his wrath, but joy that Rustum came.
But Rustum strode to his tent door, and call'd
His followers in, and bade them bring his arms,
And clad himself in steel; the arms he chose
Were plain, and on his shield was no device,
Only his helm was rich, inlaid with gold,

And, from the fluted spine atop, a plume
Of horsehair waved, a scarlet horsehair plume.
So arm'd, he issued forth; and Ruksh,[14] his horse,
Follow'd him like a faithful hound at heel—
Ruksh, whose renown was noised through all the
earth,
The horse, whom Rustum on a foray once
Did in Bokhara by the river find
A colt beneath its dam, and drove him home,
And rear'd him; a bright bay, with lofty crest,
Dight with a saddlecloth of broider'd green
Crusted with gold, and on the ground were work'd
All beasts of chase, all beasts which hunters know.
So follow'd, Rustum left his tents, and cross'd
The camp, and to the Persian host appear'd.
And all the Persians knew him, and with shouts
Hail'd; but the Tartars knew not who he was.
And dear as the wet diver to the eyes
Of his pale wife who waits and weeps on shore,
By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf,
Plunging all day in the blue waves, at night,
Having made up his tale[15] of precious pearls,
Rejoins her in their hut upon the sands—
So dear to the pale Persians Rustum came.
And Rustum to the Persian front advanced,
And Sohrab arm'd in Haman's tent, and came.
And as afield the reapers cut a swath
Down through the middle of a rich man's corn,
And on each side are squares of standing corn,
And in the midst a stubble, short and bare—
So on each side were squares of men, with spears

---

[14] *Ruksh,* also spelled *Raksh.*

[15] *Tale* means *count* or *reckoning.* The diver had gathered all the pearls required from him for the day.

Bristling, and in the midst, the open sand.
And Rustum came upon the sand, and cast
His eyes toward the Tartar tents, and saw
Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he came.
As some rich woman, on a winter's morn,
Eyes through her silken curtains the poor drudge
Who with numb blacken'd fingers makes her fire—
At cock-crow, on a starlit winter's morn,
When the frost flowers the whiten'd window-panes—
And wonders how she lives, and what the thoughts
Of that poor drudge may be; so Rustum eyed
The unknown adventurous youth, who from afar
Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth
All the most valiant chiefs; long he perused
His spirited air, and wonder'd who he was.
For very young he seem'd, tenderly rear'd;
Like some young cypress, tall, and dark, and straight,
Which in a queen's secluded garden throws
Its slight dark shadow on the moonlit turf,
By midnight, to a bubbling fountain's sound—
So slender Sohrab seem'd, so softly rear'd.[16]
And a deep pity enter'd Rustum's soul
As he beheld him coming; and he stood,
And beckon'd to him with his hand, and said:—
"O thou young man, the air of heaven is soft,
And warm, and pleasant; but the grave is cold!
Heaven's air is better than the cold dead grave.
Behold me! I am vast, and clad in iron,
And tried; and I have stood on many a field

---

[16] This description by Arnold scarcely tallies with the idea we have obtained of the powerful Sohrab from reading the accounts taken from the *Shah Nameh*. Arnold's is the more poetic idea, and increases the reader's sympathy for Sohrab.

Of blood, and I have fought with many a foe—
Never was that field lost, or that foe saved.
O Sohrab, wherefore wilt thou rush on death?
Be govern'd![17] quit the Tartar host, and come
To Iran, and be as my son to me,
And fight beneath my banner till I die!
There are no youths in Iran brave as thou."
So he spake, mildly; Sohrab heard his voice,
The mighty voice of Rustum, and he saw
His giant figure planted on the sand,
Sole, like some single tower, which a chief
Hath builded on the waste in former years
Against the robbers; and he saw that head,
Streak'd with its first gray hairs;—hope fill'd his soul,
And he ran forward and embraced his knees,
And clasp'd his hand within his own, and said:—
"Oh, by thy father's head! by thine own soul!
Art thou not Rustum? speak! art thou not he?"
But Rustum eyed askance the kneeling youth,
And turn'd away, and spake to his own soul:—
"Ah me, I muse what this young fox may mean!
False, wily, boastful, are these Tartar boys.
For if I now confess this thing he asks,
And hide it not, but say: 'Rustum is here!'
He will not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,
But he will find some pretext not to fight,
And praise my fame, and proffer courteous gifts,
A belt or sword perhaps, and go his way.
And on a feast tide, in Afrasiab's hall,
In Samarcand, he will arise and cry:
'I challenged once, when the two armies camp'd
Beside the Oxus, all the Persian lords

---

[17] *Be governed*, that is, *take my advice.*

To cope with me in single fight; but they
Shrank, only Rustum dared; then he and I
Changed gifts, and went on equal terms away.
So will he speak, perhaps, while men applaud;
Then were the chiefs of Iran shamed through me."
  And then he turn'd, and sternly spake aloud:—
"Rise! wherefore dost thou vainly question thus
Of Rustum? I am here, whom thou hast call'd
By challenge forth; make good thy vaunt, or yield!
Is it with Rustum only thou wouldst fight?
Rash boy, men look on Rustum's face and flee!
For well I know, that did great Rustum stand
Before thy face this day, and were reveal'd,
There would be then no talk of fighting more.
But being what I am, I tell thee this—
Do thou record it in thine inmost soul:
Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt and yield,
Or else thy bones shall strew this sand, till winds
Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer floods,
Oxus in summer wash them all away."
  He spoke; and Sohrab answer'd, on his feet:—
"Art thou so fierce? Thou wilt not fright me so!
I am no girl, to be made pale by words.
Yet this thou hast said well, did Rustum stand
Here on this field, there were no fighting then.
But Rustum is far hence, and we stand here.
Begin! thou art more vast, more dread than I,
And thou art proved, I know, and I am young—
But yet success sways with the breath of heaven.
And though thou thinkest that thou knowest sure
Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely know.
For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,
Poised on the top of a huge wave of fate,
Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall.

And whether it will heave us up to land,
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,
Back out to sea, to the deep waves of death,
We know not, and no search will make us know;
Only the event will teach us in its hour."
He spoke, and Rustum answer'd not, but hurl'd
His spear; down from the shoulder, down it came,
As on some partridge in the corn a hawk,
That long has tower'd in the airy clouds,
Drops like a plummet; Sohrab saw it come,
And sprang aside, quick as a flash; the spear
Hiss'd and went quivering down into the sand,
Which it sent flying wide;—then Sohrab threw
In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield; sharp rang,
The iron plates rang sharp, but turn'd the spear.
And Rustum seized his club, which none but he
Could wield; an unlopp'd trunk it was, and huge,
Still rough— like those which men in treeless plains
To build them boats fish from the flooded rivers,
Hyphasis or Hydaspes, when, high up
By their dark spring, the wind in winter time
Hath made in Himalayan forests wrack,
And strewn the channels with torn boughs—so huge
The club which Rustum lifted now, and struck
One stroke; but again Sohrab sprang aside,
Lithe as the glancing snake, and the club came
Thundering to earth, and leapt from Rustum's hand.
And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and fell
To his knees, and with his fingers clutch'd the sand;
And now might Sohrab have unsheathed his sword,
And pierced the mighty Rustum while he lay
Dizzy, and on his knees, and choked with sand;

But he look'd on, and smiled, nor bared his sword,
But courteously drew back, and spoke, and said:—
"Thou strik'st too hard! that club of thine will float
Upon the summer floods, and not my bones.
But rise, and be not wroth! not wroth am I;
No, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my soul.
Thou say'st, thou art not Rustum; be it so!
Who art thou then, that canst so touch my soul?
Boy as I am, I have seen battles too—
Have waded foremost in their bloody waves,
And heard their hollow roar of dying men;
But never was my heart thus touch'd before.
Are they from Heaven, these softenings of the heart?
O thou old warrior, let us yield to Heaven!
Come, plant we here in earth our angry spears,
And make a truce, and sit upon this sand,
And pledge each other in red wine, like friends,
And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's deeds.
There are enough foes in the Persian host,
Whom I may meet, and strike, and feel no pang;
Champions enough Afrasiab has, whom thou
Mayst fight; fight *them*, when they confront thy spear!
But oh, let there be peace 'twixt thee and me!"
He ceased, but while he spake, Rustum had risen,
And stood erect, trembling with rage; his club
He left to lie, but had regained his spear,
Whose fiery point now in his mail'd right hand
Blazed bright and baleful, like that autumn star,
The baleful sign of fevers; dust had soil'd
His stately crest, and dimm'd his glittering arms.
His breast heaved, his lips foam'd, and twice his voice

Was choked with rage; at last these words broke way:—
"Girl! nimble with thy feet, not with thy hands!
Curl'd minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words!
Fight, let me hear thy hateful voice no more!
Thou are not in Afrasiab's gardens now
With Tartar girls, with whom thou art wont to dance;
But on the Oxus sands, and in the dance
Of battle, and with me, who make no play
Of war; I fight it out, and hand to hand.
Speak not to me of truce, and pledge, and wine!
Remember all thy valor; try thy feints
And cunning! all the pity I had is gone;
Because thou hast shamed me before both the hosts
With thy light skipping tricks, and thy girl's wiles."

He spoke, and Sohrab kindled at his taunts,
And he too drew his sword; at once they rush'd
Together, as two eagles on one prey
Come rushing down together from the clouds,
One from the east, one from the west; their shields
Dash'd with a clang together, and a din
Rose, such as that the sinewy woodcutters
Make often in the forest's heart at morn,
Of hewing axes, crashing trees—such blows
Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail'd.
And you would say that sun and stars took part
In that unnatural[18] conflict; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in heaven, and dark'd the sun
Over the fighters' heads; and a wind rose
Under their feet, and moaning swept the plain,
And in a sandy whirlwind wrapp'd the pair.

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[18] It is not natural for father and son to fight thus.

In gloom they twain were wrapp'd, and they alone;
For both the onlooking hosts on either hand
Stood in broad daylight, and the sky was pure,
And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.
But in the gloom they fought, with bloodshot eyes
And laboring breath; first Rustum struck the shield
Which Sohrab held stiff out; the steel-spiked spear
Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach the skin,
And Rustum pluck'd it back with angry groan.
Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rustum's helm,
Nor clove its steel quite through; but all the crest
He shore away, and that proud horsehair plume,
Never till now defiled, sank to the dust;
And Rustum bow'd his head; and then the gloom
Grew blacker, thunder rumbled in the air,
And lightnings rent the cloud; and Ruksh, the horse,
Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful cry;—
No horse's cry was that, most like the roar
Of some pain'd desert lion, who all day
Hath trail'd the hunter's javelin in his side,
And comes at night to die upon the sand.
The two hosts heard that cry, and quaked for fear,
And Oxus curdled as it cross'd his stream.
But Sohrab heard, and quail'd not, but rush'd on,
And struck again; and again Rustum bow'd
His head; but this time all the blade, like glass,
Sprang in a thousand shivers on the helm,
And in the hand the hilt remain'd alone.
Then Rustum raised his head; his dreadful eyes
Glared, and he shook on high his menacing spear,
And shouted: "Rustum!"—Sohrab heard that shout,
And shrank amazed: back he recoil'd one step,
And scann'd with blinking eyes the advancing form;
And then he stood bewilder'd, and he dropp'd

His covering shield, and the spear pierced his side.[19]
He reel'd, and, staggering back, sank to the ground;
And then the gloom dispersed, and the wind fell,

THE SPEAR RENT THE TOUGH PLATES

And the bright sun broke forth, and melted all
The cloud; and the two armies saw the pair—

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[19] In the *Shah Nameh* Rustum overpowers Sohrab and slays him by his superior power and skill. Arnold takes the more poetic view that Sohrab's arm is powerless when he hears his father's name.

Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet,
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand.
Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum began:—
"Sohrab, thou thoughtest in thy mind to kill
A Persian lord this day, and strip his corpse,
And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab's tent;
Or else that the great Rustum would come down
Himself to fight, and that thy wiles would move
His heart to take a gift, and let thee go;
And then that all the Tartar host would praise
Thy courage or thy craft, and spread thy fame,
To glad thy father in his weak old age.
Fool, thou art slain, and by an unknown man!
Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be
Than to thy friends, and to thy father old."
And, with a fearless mien, Sohrab replied:—
"Unknown thou art; yet thy fierce vaunt is vain.
Thou dost not slay me, proud and boastful man!
No! Rustum slays me, and this filial heart.
For were I match'd with ten such men as thee,
And I were that which till to-day I was,
They should be lying here, I standing there.
But that beloved name unnerved my arm—
That name, and something, I confess, in thee,
Which troubles all my heart, and made my shield
Fall; and thy spear transfix'd an unarm'd foe.
And now thou boastest, and insult'st my fate.
But hear thou this, fierce man, tremble to hear:
The mighty Rustum shall avenge my death!
My father, whom I seek through all the world,
He shall avenge my death, and punish thee!"
As when some hunter in the spring hath found
A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,
Upon the craggy isle of a hill lake,

And pierced her with an arrow as she rose,
And follow'd her to find her where she fell
Far off;—anon her mate comes winging back
From hunting, and a great way off descries
His huddling young left sole;[20] at that, he checks
His pinion, and with short uneasy sweeps
Circles above his eyry, with loud screams
Chiding his mate back to her nest; but she
Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,
In some far stony gorge out of his ken,
A heap of fluttering feathers—never more
Shall the lake glass[21] her, flying over it;
Never the black and dripping precipices
Echo her stormy scream as she sails by—
As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his loss,
So Rustum knew not his own loss, but stood
Over his dying son, and knew him not.
  But, with a cold incredulous voice, he said:—
"What prate is this of fathers and revenge?
The mighty Rustum never had a son."
  And, with a failing voice, Sohrab replied:—
"Ah yes, he had! and that lost son am I.
Surely the news will one day reach his ear,
Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tarries long,
Somewhere, I know not where, but far from here;
And pierce him like a stab, and make him leap
To arms, and cry for vengeance upon thee.
Fierce man, bethink thee, for an only son!
What will that grief, what will that vengeance be?
Oh, could I live till I that grief had seen!
Yet him I pity not so much, but her,
My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells

---

20. *Sole* means *solitary, alone.*

21. *Glass her* means *reflect her* as in a mirror.

With that old king, her father, who grows gray
With age, and rules over the valiant Koords.
Her most I pity, who no more will see
Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,
With spoils and honor, when the war is done.
But a dark rumor will be bruited up,
From tribe to tribe, until it reach her ear;
And then will that defenseless woman learn
That Sohrab will rejoice her sight no more,
But that in battle with a nameless foe,
By the far-distant Oxus, he is slain."
He spoke; and as he ceased, he wept aloud,
Thinking of her he left, and his own death.
He spoke; but Rustum listen'd, plunged in thought.
Nor did he yet believe it was his son
Who spoke, although he call'd back names he knew;
For he had had sure tidings that the babe,
Which was in Ader-baijan born to him,
Had been a puny girl, no boy at all—
So that sad mother sent him word, for fear
Rustum should seek the boy, to train in arms.
And so he deem'd that either Sohrab took,
By a false boast, the style of Rustum's son;
Or that men gave it him, to swell his fame.
So deem'd he: yet he listen'd, plunged in thought;
And his soul set to grief, as the vast tide
Of the bright rocking Ocean sets to shore
At the full moon; tears gather'd in his eyes;
For he remember'd his own early youth,
And all its bounding rapture; as, at dawn,
The shepherd from his mountain lodge descries
A far, bright city, smitten by the sun,
Through many rolling clouds—so Rustum saw
His youth; saw Sohrab's mother, in her bloom;

And that old king, her father, who loved well
His wandering guest, and gave him his fair child
With joy; and all the pleasant life they led,
They three, in that long-distant summer time—
The castle, and the dewy woods, and hunt
And hound, and morn on those delightful hills
In Ader-baijan. And he saw that youth,
Of age and looks to be his own dear son,[22]
Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,
Like some rich hyacinth which by the scythe
Of an unskillful gardener has been cut,
Mowing the garden grassplots near its bed,
And lies, a fragrant tower of purple bloom,
On the mown, dying grass—so Sohrab lay,
Lovely in death, upon the common sand.
And Rustum gazed on him with grief, and said:—
"O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son
Whom Rustum, wert thou his, might well have loved!
Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men
Have told thee false—thou art not Rustum's son.
For Rustum had no son; one child he had—
But one—a girl; who with her mother now
Plies some light female task, nor dreams of us—
Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds, nor war."
But Sohrab answer'd him in wrath; for now
The anguish of the deep-fix'd spear grew fierce,
And he desired to draw forth the steel,
And let the blood flow free, and so to die—
But first he would convince his stubborn foe;
And, rising sternly on one arm, he said:—
"Man, who art thou who dost deny my words?

---

[22] He sees that this young men, as far as age and appearance are concerned, might be a son of his.

Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,
And falsehood, while I lived, was far from mine.
I tell thee, prick'd upon this arm I bear
That seal which Rustum to my mother gave,
That she might prick it on the babe she bore."[23]
He spoke: and all the blood left Rustum's cheeks,
And his knees totter'd, and he smote his hand
Against his breast, his heavy mailed hand,
That the hard iron corselet clank'd aloud;
And to his heart he press'd the other hand,
And in a hollow voice he spake, and said:—
"Sohrab, that were a proof which could not lie!
If thou show this, then art thou Rustum's son."
Then, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loosed
His belt, and near the shoulder bared his arm,
And show'd a sign in faint vermilion points
Prick'd; as a cunning workman, in Pekin,
Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase,
An emperor's gift—at early morn he paints,
And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp
Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands—
So delicately prick'd the sign appear'd
On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.
It was that griffin,[24] which of old rear'd Zal,
Rustum's great father, whom they left to die,
A helpless babe, among the mountain rocks;
Him that kind creature found, and rear'd and loved—
Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.
And Sohrab bared that image on his arm,
And himself scann'd it long with mournful eyes,

---

[23] Again Arnold departs from the Persian tale, in which Sohrab wears a bracelet or amulet on his arm. Arnold's work gives a more certain indentification.

[24] The griffin spoken of in note 13.

And then he touch'd it with his hand, and said:—
"How say'st thou? Is that sign the proper sign
Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's?"
He spoke; but Rustum gazed, and gazed, and stood
Speechless; and then he utter'd one sharp cry:
"O boy—thy father!" and his voice choked there.
And then a dark cloud pass'd before his eyes,
And his head swam, and he sank down to earth.
But Sohrab crawl'd to where he lay, and cast
His arms about his neck, and kiss'd his lips,
And with fond faltering fingers stroked his cheeks,
Trying to call him back to life; and life
Came back to Rustum, and he oped his eyes,
And they stood wide with horror; and he seized
In both his hands the dust which lay around,
And threw it on his head, and smirch'd his hair,—
His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms;
And strong convulsive groanings shook his breast,
And his sobs choked him; and he clutch'd his sword,
To draw it, and forever let life out.
But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,
And with a soothing voice he spake, and said:—
"Father, forbear! for I but meet to-day
The doom which at my birth was written down
In heaven, and thou art heaven's unconscious hand.
Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,
When first I saw thee; and thy heart spoke too,
I know it! but fate trod those promptings down
Under its iron heel; fate, fate engaged
The strife, and hurl'd me on my father's spear.
But let us speak no more of this! I find
My father; let me feel that I have found!
Come, sit beside me on the sand, and take

My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,
And wash them with thy tears, and say: 'My son!'
Quick! quick! for number'd are my sands of life,
And swift; for like the lightning to this field
I came, and like the wind I go away—
Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind
But it was writ in heaven that this should be."
So said he, and his voice released the heart
Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth; he cast
His arms round his son's neck, and wept aloud,
And kiss'd him. And awe fell on both the hosts,
When they saw Rustum's grief; and Ruksh, the horse,
With his head bowing to the ground and mane
Sweeping the dust, came near, and in mute woe
First to the one then to the other moved
His head, as if inquiring what their grief
Might mean; and from his dark, compassionate eyes,
The big warm tears roll'd down, and caked the sand.
But Rustum chid him with stern voice, and said:—
"Ruksh, now thou grievest; but, O Ruksh, thy feet
Should first have rotted on their nimble joints,
Or ere they brought thy master to this field!"
But Sohrab look'd upon the horse, and said:—
"Is this, then, Ruksh? How often, in past days,
My mother told me of thee, thou brave steed,
My terrible father's terrible horse! and said,
That I should one day find thy lord and thee.
Come, let me lay my hand upon thy mane!
O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I;
For thou hast gone where I shall never go,
And snuff'd the breezes of my father's home.
And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,

And seen the River of Helmund, and the Lake
Of Zirrah; and the aged Zal himself
Has often stroked thy neck, and given thee food,
Corn in a golden platter soak'd with wine,
And said: 'O Ruksh! bear Rustum well,'— but I
Have never known my grandsire's furrow'd face,
Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Helmund stream;
But lodged among my father's foes, and seen
Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand,
Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,
And the black Toorkmun tents; and only drunk
The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,
Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed their sheep,
The northern Sir; and this great Oxus stream,
The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die."
Then, with a heavy groan, Rustum bewail'd:—
"Oh, that its waves were flowing over me!
Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt
Roll tumbling in the current o'er my head!"
But, with a grave mild voice, Sohrab replied:—
"Desire not that, my father! thou must live.
For some are born to do great deeds, and live,
As some are born to be obscured, and die.
Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,
And reap a second glory in thine age;
Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.
But come! thou seest this great host of men
Which follow me; I pray thee, slay not these!
Let me entreat for them; what have they done?
They follow'd me, my hope, my fame, my star.
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace.
But me thou must bear hence, not send with them,
But carry me with thee to Seistan,

And place me on a bed, and mourn for me,
Thou, and the snow-hair'd Zal, and all thy friends.
And thou must lay me in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound above my bones,[25]
And plant a far-seen pillar over all.
That so the passing horseman on the waste
May see my tomb a great way off, and cry:
'Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there,
Whom his great father did in ignorance kill!'
And I be not forgotten in my grave."
  And, with a mournful voice, Rustum replied:—
"Fear not! as thou hast said, Sohrab, my son,
So shall it be; for I will burn my tents,
And quit the host, and bear thee hence with me,
And carry thee away to Seistan,
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for thee,
With the snow-headed Zal, and all my friends.
And I will lay thee in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound above thy bones,
And plant a far-seen pillar over all,
And men shall not forget thee in thy grave.
And I will spare thy host; yea, let them go!
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace!
What should I do with slaying any more?
For would that all that I have ever slain
Might be once more alive; my bitterest foes,
And they who were call'd champions in their time,
And through whose death I won that fame I have—
And I were nothing but a common man,
A poor, mean soldier, and without renown,
So thou mightest live too, my son, my son!
Or rather would that I, even I myself,

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[25] The Persian tradition is that over the spot where Sohrab was buried a huge mound, shaped like the hoof of a horse, was erected.

Might now be lying on this bloody sand,
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of thine,
Not thou of mine! and I might die, not thou;
And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan;
And Zal might weep above my grave, not thine;
And say: 'O son, I weep thee not too sore,
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine end!'
But now in blood and battles was my youth,
And full of blood and battles is my age,
And I shall never end this life of blood."
  Then, at the point of death, Sohrab replied:—
"A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful man!
But thou shalt yet have peace; only not now,
Not yet! but thou shalt have it on that day[26]
When thou shalt sail in a high-masted ship,
Thou and the other peers of a Kai Khosroo,
Returning home over the salt blue sea,
From laying thy dear master in his grave."
  And Rustum gazed in Sohrab's face, and said:—
"Soon be that day, my son, and deep that sea!
Till then, if fate so wills, let me endure."
  He spoke; and Sohrab smiled on him, and took
The spear, and drew it from his side, and eased
His wound's imperious anguish; but the blood
Came welling from the open gash, and life
Flow'd with the stream;—all down his cold white side
The crimson torrent ran, dim now and soil'd,
Like the soil'd tissue of white violets
Left, freshly gather'd, on their native bank,

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[26] It is said that shortly after the death of Sohrab the king himself died while on a visit to a famous spring far in the north, and as the nobles were returning with his corpse all were lost in a great tempest. Unfortunately for Sohrab's prophecy, Persian traditions do not include Rustum among the lost.

By children whom their nurses call with haste
Indoors from the sun's eye; his head droop'd low,
His limbs grew slack; motionless, white, he lay—
White, with eyes closed; only when heavy gasps,
Deep heavy gasps quivering through all his frame,
Convulsed him back to life, he open'd them,
And fix'd them feebly on his father's face;
Till now all strength was ebb'd, and from his limbs
Unwillingly the spirit fled away,
Regretting the warm mansion which it left,
And youth, and bloom, and this delightful world.
  So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead;
And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.
As those black granite pillars, once high-rear'd
By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear
His house, now 'mid their broken flights of steps
Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side—
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.
  And night came down over the solemn waste,
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole pair,
And darken'd all; and a cold fog, with night,
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,
As of a great assembly loosed, and fires
Began to twinkle through the fog; for now
Both armies moved to camp, and took their meal;
The Persians took it on the open sands
Southward, the Tartars by the river marge;
And Rustum and his son were left alone.

  But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there moved,
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Chorasmian waste,

Under the solitary moon;—he flow'd
Right for the polar star, past Orgunjè,
Brimming, and bright, and large; then sands begin

RUSTUM SORROWS OVER SOHRAB

To hem his watery march, and dam his streams,
And split his currents; that for many a league
The shorn and parcel'd Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles—
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had

In his high mountain cradle in Pamere,
A foil'd circuitous wanderer—till at last
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.[27]

Matthew Arnold was one of England's purest and greatest men. As scholar, teacher, poet and critic he labored zealously for the betterment of his race and sought to bring them back to a clearer, lovelier spiritual life and to win them from the base and sordid schemes that make only for material success.

He was born in 1822 and was the son of Doctor Thomas Arnold, the great teacher who was so long headmaster of the famous Rugby school, and whose scholarly and Christian influence is so faithfully brought out in Hughes's ever popular story *Tom Brown's School Days.*

Matthew Arnold received his preparatory education in his father's school at Rugby, and his college training at Oxford. He was always a student and always active in educational work, as an inspector of schools, and for ten years as professor of poetry at Oxford. He twice visited the United States and both times lectured here. His criticisms of America and Americans were severe, for he saw predominant the spirit of money-getting, the thirst for material prosperity and the absence of spiritual interests. In 1888, while at the house of a friend in Liverpool, he died suddenly and peacefully from an attack of heart disease.

Arnold was one of the most exacting and critical of Eng-

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[27] This beautiful stanza makes a peculiarly artistic termination to the poem. After the storm and stress of the combat and the heart-breaking pathos of Sohrab's death, the reader willingly rests his thought on the majestic Oxus that still flows on, unchangeable, but ever changing. The suggestion is that after all nature is triumphant, that our pains and losses, our most grievous disappointments and greatest griefs are but incidents in the great drama of life, and that, though like the river Oxus, we for a time become "foiled, circuitous wanderers," we at last see before us the luminous home, bright and tranquil under the shining stars.

Matthew Arnold
1822–1888

lish writers, a man who applied to his own works the same severe standards that he set up for others. As a result his writings have become one of the standards of purity and taste in style.

The story of *Sohrab and Rustum* pleased him, and he enjoyed writing the poem, as may be seen from a letter to his mother, written in 1853. He says:

"All my spare time has been spent on a poem which I have just finished, and which I think by far the best thing I have yet done, and I think it will be generally liked; though one can never be sure of this. I have had the greatest pleasure in composing it, a rare thing with me, and, as I think, a good test of the pleasure what you write is likely to afford to others. But the story is a very noble and excellent one."

Two men, both competent to judge, have given at length their opinion of Matthew Arnold's character. So admirable a man deserves to be known by the young, although most of his writings will be understood and appreciated only by persons of some maturity in years. Mr. John Morley says:

"He was incapable of sacrificing the smallest interest of anybody to his own; he had not a spark of envy or jealousy; he stood well aloof from all the hustlings and jostlings by which selfish men push on; he bore life's disappointments—and he was disappointed in some reasonable hopes—with good nature and fortitude; he cast no burden upon others, and never shrank from bearing his own share of the daily load to the last ounce of it; he took the deepest, sincerest, and most active interest in the well-being of his country and his countrymen."

Mr. George E. Woodbury in an essay on Arnold remarks concerning the man as shown in his private letters:

"A nature warm to its own, kindly to all, cheerful, fond of sport and fun, and always fed from pure fountains, and with it a character so founded upon the rock, so humbly serviceable, so continuing in power and grace, must wake in all the responses of happy appreciation and leave the charm of memory."

THE POET AND THE PEASANT

FROM THE FRENCH OF EMILE SOUVESTRE

A YOUNG man was walking through a forest, and in spite of the approach of night, in spite of the mist that grew denser every moment, he was walking slowly, paying no heed either to the weather or to the hour.

His dress of green cloth, his buckskin gaiters, and the gun slung across his shoulder might have caused him to be taken for a sportsman, had not the book that half protruded from his game-bag betrayed the dreamer, and proved that Arnold de Munster was less occupied with observing the track of wild game than in communing with himself.

For some moments his mind had been filled with thoughts of his family and of the friends he had left in Paris. He remembered the studio that he had adorned with fantastic engravings, strange paintings, curious statuettes; the German songs that his sister had sung, the melancholy verses that he had repeated in the subdued light of the evening lamps, and the long talks in which every one confessed his inmost feelings, in which all the mysteries of thought were discussed and translated into impassioned or graceful words! Why had he abandoned these choice pleasures to bury himself in the country?

He was aroused at last from his meditations by the consciousness that the mist had changed into rain and was beginning to penetrate his shooting-coat. He was about to quicken his steps, but in looking around him he saw that he had lost his way, and he tried vainly to determine the direction he must take. A first attempt only succeeded in bewildering him still more. The daylight faded, the rain fell more heavily, and he continued to plunge at random into unknown paths.

He had begun to be discouraged, when the sound of bells reached him through the leafless trees. A cart driven by a big man in a blouse had appeared at an intersecting road and was coming toward the one that Arnold had just reached.

Arnold stopped to wait for the man and asked him if he were far from Sersberg.

"Sersberg!" repeated the carter; "you don't expect to sleep there to-night?"

"Pardon me, but I do," answered the young man.

"At Sersberg?" went on his interlocutor; "you'll have to go by train, then! It is six good leagues from here to the gate; and considering the weather and the roads, they are equal to twelve."

The young man uttered an exclamation. He had left the château that morning and did not think that he had wandered so far; but he had been on the wrong path for hours, and in thinking to take the road to Sersberg he had continued to turn his back upon it. It was too late to make good such an error; so he was forced to accept the shelter offered by his new companion, whose farm was fortunately within gunshot.

He accordingly regulated his pace to the carter's and attempted to enter into conversation with him; but Moser was not a talkative man and was apparently a complete stranger to the young man's usual sensations. When, on issuing from the forest, Arnold pointed to the magnificent horizon purpled by the last rays of the setting sun, the farmer contented himself with a grimace.

"Bad weather for to-morrow," he muttered, drawing his cloak about his shoulders.

"One ought to be able to see the entire valley from here," went on Arnold, striving to pierce the gloom that already clothed the foot of the mountain.

"Yes, yes," said Moser, shaking his head; "the ridge is high enough for that. There's an invention for you that isn't good for much."

"What invention?"

"The mountains."

"You would rather have everything level?"

"What a question!" cried the farmer, laughing. "You might as well ask me if I would not rather ruin my horses."

"True," said Arnold in a tone of somewhat contemptuous irony. "I had forgotten the horses! It is clear that God should have thought principally of them when he created the world."

"I don't know as to God," answered Moser quietly, " but the engineers certainly made a mistake in forgetting them when they made the roads. The horse is the laborer's best friend, monsieur—without disrespect to the oxen, which have their value too."

Arnold looked at the peasant. "So you see in your surroundings only the advantages you can derive from them?" he asked gravely. "The forest, the mountains, the clouds, all say nothing to you? You have never paused before the setting sun or at the sight of the woods lighted by the stars?"

"I?" cried the farmer. "Do you take me for a maker of almanacs? What should I get out of your starlight and the setting sun? The main thing is to earn enough for three meals a day and to keep one's stomach warm. Would monsieur like a drink of cognac? It comes from the other side of the Rhine."

He held out a little wicker-covered bottle to Arnold, who refused by a gesture. The positive coarseness of the peasant had rekindled his regret and his contempt. Were they really men such as he was, these unfortunates, doomed to unceasing labor, who lived in the bosom of nature without heeding it and whose souls never rose above the most material sensations? Was there one point of resemblance which could attest their original brotherhood to such as he? Arnold doubted this more and more each moment.

These thoughts had the effect of communicating to his manner a sort of contemptuous indifference toward his conductor, to whom he ceased to talk. Moser showed neither surprise nor pain and set to whistling an air, interrupted from time to time by some brief word of encouragement to his horses.

Thus they arrived at the farm, where the noise of the bells announced their coming. A young boy and a woman of middle age appeared on the threshold.

"Ah, it is the father!" cried the woman, looking back into the house, where could be heard the voices of several children, who came running to the door with shouts of joy and pressed around the peasant.

"Wait a moment, youngsters," interrupted the father in his big voice as he rummaged in the cart and brought forth a covered basket. "Let Fritz unharness."

But the children continued to besiege the farmer, all talking at once. He bent to kiss them, one after another; then rising suddenly:

"Where is Jean?" he asked with a quickness that had something of uneasiness in it.

"Here, father, here," answered a shrill little voice from the farm-house door; "mother doesn't want me to go out in the rain."

"Stay where you are," said Moser, throwing the traces on the backs of the horses; "I will go to you, little son. Go in, the rest of you, so as not to tempt him to come out."

The three children went back to the doorway, where little Jean was standing beside his mother, who was protecting him from the weather.

He was a poor little creature, so cruelly deformed that at the first glance one could not have told his age or the nature of his infirmity. His whole body, distorted by sickness, formed a curved, not to say a broken line. His disproportionately large head was sunken between two unequally rounded shoulders, while his body was sustained by two little crutches; these took the place of the shrunken legs, which could not support him.

At the farmer's approach he held out his thin arms with an expression of love that made Moser's furrowed face brighten. The father lifted him in his strong arms with an exclamation of tender delight.

"Come!" he cried, "hug your father—with both arms—hard! How has he been since yesterday?"

The mother shook her head.

"Always the cough," she answered in a low tone.

"It's nothing, father," the child answered in his shrill voice. "Louis had drawn me too fast in my wheeled chair; but I am well, very well; I feel as strong as a man."

The peasant placed him carefully on the ground, set him upon his little crutches, which had fallen, and looked at him with an air of satisfaction.

"Don't you think he's growing, wife?" he asked in the tone of a man who wishes to be encouraged. "Walk a bit, Jean; walk, boy! He walks more quickly and more strongly. It'll all come right, wife; we must only be patient."

The farmer's wife made no reply, but her eyes turned toward the feeble child with a look of despair so deep that Arnold trembled; fortunately Moser paid no heed.

"Come, the whole brood of you," he went on, opening the basket he had taken from the cart; "here is something for every one! In line and hold out your hands."

The peasant had displayed three small white rolls glazed in the baking; three cries of joy burst forth simultaneously and six hands advanced to seize the rolls, but they all paused at the word of command.

"And Jean?" asked the childish voices.

"To the devil with Jean," answered Moser gayly; "there is nothing for him to-night. Jean shall have his share another time."

But the child smiled and tried to get up to look into the basket. The farmer stepped back a pace, took off the cover carefully, and lifting his arm with an air of solemnity, displayed before the eyes of all a cake of gingerbread garnished with almonds and pink and white sugar-plums.

There was a general shout of admiration. Jean himself could not restrain a cry of delight; a slight flush rose to his pale face and he held out his hands with an air of joyful expectancy.

"Ah, you like it, little mole!" cried the peasant, whose face was radiant at the sight of the child's pleasure; "take it, old man, take it; it is nothing but sugar and honey."

He placed the gingerbread in the hands of the little hunchback, who trembled with happiness, watched him hobble off, and turning to Arnold when the sound of the crutches was lost in the house, said with a slight break in his voice:

"He is my eldest. Sickness has deformed him a little, but he's a shrewd fellow and it only depends upon us to make a gentleman of him."

While speaking he had crossed the first room on the ground-floor and led his guest into a species of dining-room, the whitewashed walls of which were decorated only with a few rudely colored prints. As he entered, Arnold saw Jean seated on the floor and surrounded by his brothers, among whom he was dividing the cake given him by his father. But each one objected to the size of his portion and wished to lessen it; it required all the little hunchback's eloquence to make them accept what he had given them. For some time the young sportsman watched this dispute with singular interest, and when the children had gone out again he expressed his admiration to the farmer's wife.

"It is quite true," she said with a smile and a sigh, "that there are times when it seems as though it were a good thing for them to see Jean's infirmity. It is hard for them to give up to each other, but not one of them can refuse Jean anything; it is a constant exercise in kindness and devotion."

"Great virtue, that!" interrupted Moser. "Who could refuse anything to such a poor, afflicted little innocent? It's a silly thing for a man to say; but, look you, monsieur, that child there always makes me want to cry. Often when I am at work in the fields, I begin all at once to think about him. I say to myself Jean is ill! or Jean is dead! and then I have to find some excuse for coming home to see how it is. Then he is so weak and so ailing! If we did not love him more than the others, he would be too unhappy."

"Yes," said the mother gently, "the poor child is our cross and our joy at the same time. I love all my children, monsieur, but whenever I hear the sound of Jean's crutches on the floor, I always feel a rush of happiness. It is a sign that the good God has not yet taken our darling away from us. It seems to me as though Jean brought happiness to the house just like swallows' nests fastened to the windows. If I hadn't him to take care of, I should think there was nothing for me to do."

Arnold listened to these naive expressions of tenderness with an interest that was mingled with astonishment. The farmer's wife called a servant to help set the table; and at Moser's invitation, the young man approached the brushwood fire which had been rekindled.

As he was leaning against the smoky mantelpiece, his eye fell upon a small black frame that inclosed a withered leaf. Moser noticed it.

"Ah! you are looking at my relic. It's a leaf of the weeping-willow that grows down there on the tomb of Napoleon! I got it from a Strasbourg merchant who had served in the Old Guard. I wouldn't part with it for a hundred crowns."

"Then there is some particular sentiment attached to it?"

"Sentiment, no," answered the peasant; "but I too was discharged from the Fourth Regiment of Hussars, a brave regiment, monsieur. There were only eight men left of our squadron, so when the Little Corporal passed in front of the line he saluted us—yes, monsieur, raised his hat to us! That was something to make us ready to die to the last man, look you. Ah! he was the father of the soldier!"

Here the peasant began to fill his pipe, looking the while at the black frame and the withered leaf. In this reminder of a marvelous destiny there was evidently for him a whole romance of youth, emotion, and regret. He recalled the last struggles of the Empire, in which he had taken part, the reviews held by the emperor, when his mere presence aroused confidence in victory; the passing successes of France's famous campaign, so soon expiated by the disaster at Waterloo; the departure of the vanquished general and his long agony on the rock of Saint Helena.

Arnold respected the old soldier's silent preoccupation and waited until he should resume the conversation.

The arrival of supper roused him from his reverie; he drew up a chair for his guest and took his place at the opposite side of the table.

"Come! fall to on the soup," he cried brusquely. "I have had nothing since morning but two swallows of cognac. I should eat an ox whole to-night."

To prove his words, he began to empty the huge porringer of soup before him.

For several moments nothing was heard but the clatter of spoons followed by that of the knives cutting up the side of bacon served by the farmer's wife. His walk and the fresh air had given Arnold himself an appetite that made him forget his Parisian daintiness. The supper grew gayer and gayer, when all at once the peasant raised his head.

"And Farraut?" he asked. "I have not seen him since my return."

His wife and the children looked at each other without answering.

"Well, what is it?" went on Moser, who saw their embarrassment. "Where is the dog? What has happened to him? Why don't you answer, Dorothée?"

"Don't be angry, father," interrupted Jean; "we didn't dare tell you, but Farraut went away and has not come back."

"A thousand devils! You should have told me!" cried the peasant, striking the table with his fist. "What road did he take?"

"The road to Garennes."

"When was it?"

"After dinner: we saw him go up the little path."

"Something must have happened to him," said Moser, getting up. "The poor animal is almost blind and there are sand pits all along the road! Go fetch my sheepskin and the lantern, wife. I must find Farraut, dead or alive."

Dorothée went out without making any remark either about the hour or the weather, and soon reappeared with what her husband had asked for.

"You must think a great deal of this dog," said Arnold, surprised at such zeal.

"It is not I," answered Moser, lighting his pipe; "but he did good service to Dorothée's father. One day when the old man was on his way home from market with the price of his oxen in his pocket, four men tried to murder him for his money, and they would have done it if it had not been for Farraut; so when the good man died two years ago, he called me to his bedside and asked me to care for the dog as for one of his children—those were his words. I promised, and it would be a crime not to keep one's promise to the dead. Fritz, give me my iron-shod stick. I wouldn't have anything happen to Farraut for a pint of my blood. The animal has been in the family for twenty years—he knows us all by our voices—and he recalls the grandfather. I shall see you again, monsieur, and good-night until to-morrow."

Moser wrapped himself in his sheepskin and went out. They could hear the sound of his iron-shod stick die away in the soughing of the wind and the falling of the rain.

After awhile the farmer's wife offered to conduct Arnold to his quarters for the night, but Arnold asked permission to await the return of the master of the house, if his return were not delayed too long. His interest in the man who had at first seemed to him so vulgar, and in the humble family whose existence he had thought to be so valueless, continued to increase.

The vigil was prolonged, however, and Moser did not return. The children had fallen asleep one after another, and even Jean, who had held out the longest, had to seek his bed at last. Dorothée, uneasy, went incessantly from the fireside to the door and from the door to the fireside. Arnold strove to reassure her, but her mind was excited by suspense. She accused Moser of never thinking of his health or of his safety; of always being ready to sacrifice himself for others; of being unable to see a human being or an animal suffer without risking all to relieve it. As she went on with her complaint, which sounded strangely like a glorification, her fears grew more vivid; she had a thousand gloomy forebodings. The dog had howled all through the previous night; an owl had perched upon the roof of the house; it was a Wednesday, always an unfortunate day in the family. Her fears reached such a pitch at last that the young man volunteered to go in search of her husband, and she was about to awaken Fritz to accompany him, when the sound of footsteps was heard outside.

"It is Moser!" said the woman, stopping short.

"Oho, there, open quickly, wife," cried the farmer from without.

She ran to draw the bolt, and Moser appeared, carrying in his arms the old blind dog.

"Here he is," he said gayly. "God help me! I thought I should never find him: the poor brute had rolled to the bottom of the big stone quarry."

"And you went there to get him?" asked Dorothée, horror-stricken.

"Should I have left him at the bottom to find him drowned to-morrow?" asked the old soldier. "I slid down the length of the big mountain and I carried him up in my arms like a child: the lantern was left behind, though."

"But you risked your life, you foolhardy man!" cried Dorothée, who was shuddering at her husband's explanation.

The latter shrugged his shoulders.

"Ah, bah!" he said with careless gayety; "who risks nothing has nothing; I have found Farraut—that's the principal thing. If the grandfather sees us from up there, he ought to be satisfied."

This reflection, made in an almost indifferent tone, touched Arnold, who held out his hand impetuously to the peasant.

"What you have done was prompted by a good heart," he said with feeling.

"What? Because I have kept a dog from drowning?" answered Moser. "Dogs and men—thank God I have helped more than one out of a hole since I was born; but I have sometimes had better weather than to-night to do it in. Say, wife, there must be a glass of cognac left; bring the bottle here; there is nothing that dries you better when you're wet."

Dorothée brought the bottle to the farmer, who drank to his guest's health, and then each sought his bed.

The next morning the weather was fine again; the sky was clear, and the birds, shaking their feathers, sang on the still dripping trees.

When he descended from the garret, where a bed had been prepared for him, Arnold found near the door Farraut, who was warming himself in the sun, while little Jean, seated on his crutches, was making him a collar of eglantine berries. A little further on, in the first room, the farmer was clinking glasses with a beggar who had come to collect his weekly tithe; Dorothée was holding his wallet, which she was filling.

"Come, old Henri, one more draught," said the peasant, refilling the beggar's glass; "if you mean to finish your round you must take courage."

"That one always finds here," said the beggar with a smile; "there are not many houses in the parish where they give more, but there is not one where they give with such good will."

"Be quiet, will you, Père Henri?" interrupted Moser; "do people talk of such things? Drink and let the good God judge each man's actions. You, too, have served; we are old comrades."

The old man contented himself with a shake of the head and touched his glass to the farmer's; but one could see that he was more moved by the heartiness that accompanied the alms than the alms itself.

When he had taken up his wallet again and bade them good-by, Moser watched him go until he had disappeared around a bend in the road. Then drawing a breath, he said, turning to his guest:

"One more poor old man without a home. You may believe me or not, monsieur, but when I see men with shaking heads going about like that, begging their bread from door to door, it turns my blood. I should like to set the table for them all and touch glasses with them all as I did just now with Père Henri. To keep your heart from breaking at such a sight, you must believe that there is a world up there where those who have not been summoned to the ordinary here will receive double rations and double pay."

"You must hold to that belief," said Arnold; "it will support and console you. It will be long before

I shall forget the hours I have passed in your house, and I trust they will not be the last."

"Whenever you choose," said the old soldier; "if you don't find the bed up there too hard and if you can digest our bacon, come at your pleasure, and we shall always be under obligations to you."

He shook the hand that the young man had extended, pointed out the way that he must take, and did not leave the threshold until he had seen his guest disappear in the turn of the road.

For some time Arnold walked with lowered head, but upon reaching the summit of the hill he turned to take a last backward look, and seeing the farmhouse chimney, above which curled a light wreath of smoke, he felt a tear of tenderness rise to his eye.

"May God always protect those who live under that roof!" he murmured; "for where pride made me see creatures incapable of understanding the finer qualities of the soul, I have found models for myself. I judged the depths by the surface and thought poetry absent because, instead of showing itself without, it hid itself in the heart of the things themselves; ignorant observer that I was, I pushed aside with my foot what I thought were pebbles, not guessing that in these rude stones were hidden diamonds."

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE AND "HOME, SWEET HOME"

ABOUT a hundred years ago, a young man, little more than a boy, was drawing large audiences to the theaters of our eastern cities. New York received him with enthusiasm, cultured Boston was charmed by his person and his graceful bearing, while warm-hearted Baltimore fairly outdid herself in hospitality. Until this time five hundred dollars was a large sum for a theater to yield in a single night in Baltimore, but people paid high premiums to hear the boy actor, and a one-evening audience brought in more than a thousand dollars.

About the same time in Engand another boy actor, Master Betty, was creating great excitement, and him they called the Young Roscius, a name that was quickly caught up by the admirers of the Yankee youth, who then became known as the Young American Roscius.

He was a wonderful boy in every way, was John Howard Payne. One of a large family of children, several of whom were remarkably bright, he had from his parents the most careful training, though they were not able always to give him the advantages they wished. John was born in New York City, but early moved with his parents to East Hampton, the most eastern town on the jutting southern point of Long Island. Here in the charming little village he passed his childhood, a leader among his playmates, and a favorite among his elders. His slight form, rounded face, beautiful features and graceful bearing combined to attract also the marked attention of every stranger who met him.

At thirteen years of age he was at work in New York, and soon was discovered to be the editor in secret of a paper called *The Thespian Mirror*. The merit of this juvenile sheet attracted the attention of many people, and among them of Mr. Seaman, a wealthy New Yorker who offered the talented boy an opportunity to go to college free of expense. Young Payne gladly accepted the invitation, and proceeded to Union College, where he soon became one of the most popular boys in the school. His handsome face, graceful manners and elegant delivery were met with applause whenever he spoke in public, and a natural taste led him to seek every chance for declamation and acting. Even as a child he had showed his dramatic ability, and more than once he was urged to go upon the stage. But his father refused all offers and kept the boy steadily at his work.

When he was seventeen, however, two events occurred which changed all his plans. First his mother died, and then his father failed in business, and the young man saw that he must himself take up the burdens of the family. Accordingly he left college before graduation and began his career as an actor.

His success was immediate and unusual, if we may judge from the words of contemporary critics. His first appearance in Boston was on February 24,

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE
1791–1852

1809, as Douglas in *Young Norval.* In this play occurs the speech that countless American boys have declaimed, "On the Grampian Hills my father feeds his flocks." Of Payne's rendition a critic says, "He had all the skill of a finished artist combined with the freshness and simplicity of youth. Great praise, but there are few actors who can claim any competition with him." Six weeks later he was playing Hamlet there, and his elocution is spoken of as remarkable for its purity, his action as suited to the passion he represented, and his performance as an exquisite one that delighted his brilliant audience.

"Upon the stage, a glowing boy appeared
Whom heavenly smiles and grateful thunders cheered;
Then through the throng delighted murmurs ran.
The boy enacts more wonders than a man."

Another, writing about this time, says, "Young Payne was a perfect Cupid in his beauty, and his sweet voice, self-possessed yet modest manners, wit, vivacity and premature wisdom, made him a most engaging prodigy."

And again, "A more engaging youth could not be imagined; he won all hearts by the beauty of his person and his captivating address, the premature richness of his mind and his chaste and flowing utterance."

His great successes here led him to go to England, where his popularity was not nearly so great, and where the critics pounced upon him unmercifully, hurting his feelings beyond repair. Still he succeeded moderately both in England and on the Continent, until he turned his attention to writing rather than to acting. *Brutus,* a tragedy, is the only one of the sixty works which he wrote, translated or adapted, that ever is played nowadays. In *Clari, the Maid of Milan,* one of his operas, however, appeared a little song that has made the name of John Howard Payne eternally famous throughout the world.

Home, Sweet Home had originally four stanzas, but by common consent the third and fourth have been dropped because of their inferiority. The two remaining ones are sung everywhere with heartfelt appreciation, and the air, whatever its origin, has now association only with the words of the old home song. Miss Ellen Tree, who sang it in the opera, charmed her audience instantly, and in the end won her husband through its melody.

In 1823, 100,000 copies were sold, and the publishers made 2,000 guineas from it in two years. In fact, it enriched everybody who had anything to do with it, except Payne, who sold it originally for £30.

Perhaps the most noteworthy incident connected with the public rendition of *Home, Sweet Home* occurred in Washington at one of the theaters where Jenny Lind was singing before an audience composed of the first people of our land. In one of the boxes sat the author, then on a visit to this country, and a favorite everywhere. The prima donna sang her greatest classical music and moved her audience to the wildest applause. Then in response to the renewed calls she stepped to the front of the stage, turned her face to the box where the poet sat, and in a voice of marvelous pathos and power sang:

"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!

A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with
elsewhere.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Home, Home! Sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home!
There's no place like Home!

"An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain!
O, give me my lowly thatched cottage again!
The birds singing gaily that came at my call;—
Give me them! and the peace of mind dearer than all!
Home, Home! Sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home!
There's no place like Home!"[1]

The audience were moved to tears. Even Daniel Webster, stern man of law, lost control of himself and wept like a child.

Payne's later life was not altogether a happy one, and he felt some resentment against the world, although it may not have been justified. He was unmarried, but was no more homeless than most bachelors. He exiled himself voluntarily from his own country, and so lost much of the delightful result of his own early popularity. He may have been reduced to privation and suffering, but it was not for long at a time. Some writers have sought to heighten effect by making the author of the greatest song of home a homeless wanderer. The truth is that Payne's unhappiness was largely the result of his own peculiarities. He was given to poetic exaggeration, for there is now known to be little stern fact in the following oft-quoted writing of himself:

"How often have I been in the heart of Paris, Berlin, London or some other city, and have heard persons singing or hand organs playing *Sweet Home* without having a shilling to buy myself the next meal or a place to lay my head! The world has literally sung my song until every heart is familiar with its melody, yet I have been a wanderer from my boyhood. My country has turned me ruthlessly from office and in my old age I have to submit to humiliation for my bread."

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[1] Capitals and punctuation as written by Payne.

Upon his own request he was appointed United States consul at Tunis, and after being removed from that office continued to reside there until his death. He was buried in Saint George's Cemetery in Tunis, and there his body rested for more than thirty years, until W. W. Corcoran, a wealthy resident of Washington, had it disinterred, brought to this country and buried in the beautiful Oak Hill Cemetery near Washington. There a white marble shaft surmounted by a bust of the poet marks his last home. On one side of the shaft is the inscription:

John Howard Payne,
Author of "Home, Sweet Home."
Born June 9, 1792. Died April 9, 1852.

On the other side is chiseled this stanza:

"Sure when thy gentle spirit fled
To realms above the azure dome,
With outstretched arms God's angels said
Welcome to Heaven's Home, Sweet Home."

Much sentiment has been wasted over Payne, who was really not a great poet and whose lack of stamina prevented him from grasping the power already in his hand. We should remember, too, that the astonishing popularity of *Home, Sweet Home* is doubtless due more to the glorious melody of the air, probably composed by some unknown Sicilian, than to the wording of the two stanzas.

When we study the verses themselves we see that the first three lines are rather fine, but the fourth line is clumsy and matter-of-fact compared with the others. In the second stanza "lowly thatched cottage" may be a poetic description, but the home longing is not confined to people who have lived in thatched cottages. Tame singing birds are interesting, but home stands for higher and holier things. All he asks for are a thatched cottage, singing birds and peace of mind: a curious group of things. The fourth line of that stanza is unmusical and inharmonious.

These facts make us see that what really has made the song so dear to us is its sweet music and the powerful emotion that seizes us all when we think of the home of our childhood.

AULD LANG SYNE[1]

By ROBERT BURNS

NOTE.—The song as we know it is not the first song to bear that title, nor is it entirely original with Robert Burns. It is said that the second and third stanzas were written by him, but that the others were merely revised. In a letter to a friend, written in 1793, Burns says, "The air (of *Auld Lang Syne*) is but mediocre; but the following song, the old song of the olden time, which has never been in print, nor even in manuscript, until I took it down from an old man's singing, is enough to recommend any air." This refers to the song as we know it, but the friend, a Mr. Thompson, set the words to an old Lowland air which is the one every one now uses.

At an earlier date Burns wrote to another friend: "Is not the Scottish phrase, *auld lang syne*, exceedingly expressive? There is an old song and tune that has often thrilled through my soul. Light be the turf on the breast of the heaven-inspired poet who composed this glorious fragment."

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[1] Literally, *Auld Lang Syne* means *Old Long-Since.* It is difficult to bring out the meaning of the Scotch phrase by a single English word. Perhaps *The Good Old Times* comes as near to it as anything. The song gives so much meaning to the Scotch phrase that now every man and woman knows what *Auld Lang Syne* really stands for.

We cannot be certain that this refers to the exact wording he subsequently set down, for there were at least three versions known at that time.

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min'?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,[2]
For auld lang syne.

We twa[3] hae[4] run about the braes,[5]
And pou'd[6] the gowans[7] fine;
But we've wandered mony[8] a weary foot
Sin'[9] auld lang syne.
For auld, etc.

We twa hae paidl't[10] i' the burn,[11]
Frae[12] mornin' sun till dine;[13]
But seas between us braid[14] hae roared
Sin' auld lang syne.
For auld, etc.

[2] That is, *we will drink for the sake of old times.*

[3] *Twa* means *two.*

[4] *Hae* is the Scotch for *have.*

[5] A brae is a sloping hillside.

[6] *Pou'd* is a contracted form of *pulled.*

[7] Dandelions, daisies and other yellow flowers are called *gowans* by the Scotch.

[8] *Mony* is *many.*

[9] *Sin'* is a contraction of *since.*

[10] *Paidl't* means *paddled.*

[11] A burn is a brook.

[12] *Frae* is the Scotch word for *from.*

[13] *Dine* means *dinner-time, midday.*

[14] *Braid* is the Scotch form of *broad.*

And here's a hand, my trusty frere,[15]
And gie's[16] a hand o' thine;
And we'll tak a right guid[17] willie-waught[18]
For auld lang syne.
For auld, etc.

FOR AULD LANG SYNE

And surely ye'll be your pint-stoup,[19]
And surely I'll be mine;
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.
For auld, etc.

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[15] *Frere* means *friend.*

[16] *Gie's* is a contracted form of *give us.*

[17] *Guid* is the Scottish spelling of *good.*

[18] A willie-waught is a hearty draught.

[19] A pint-stoup is a pint-cup or flagon.

HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD

By Alfred Tennyson

HOME they brought her warrior dead:
  She nor swoon'd nor utter'd cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
  "She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
  Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
  Yet she never spoke nor moved.

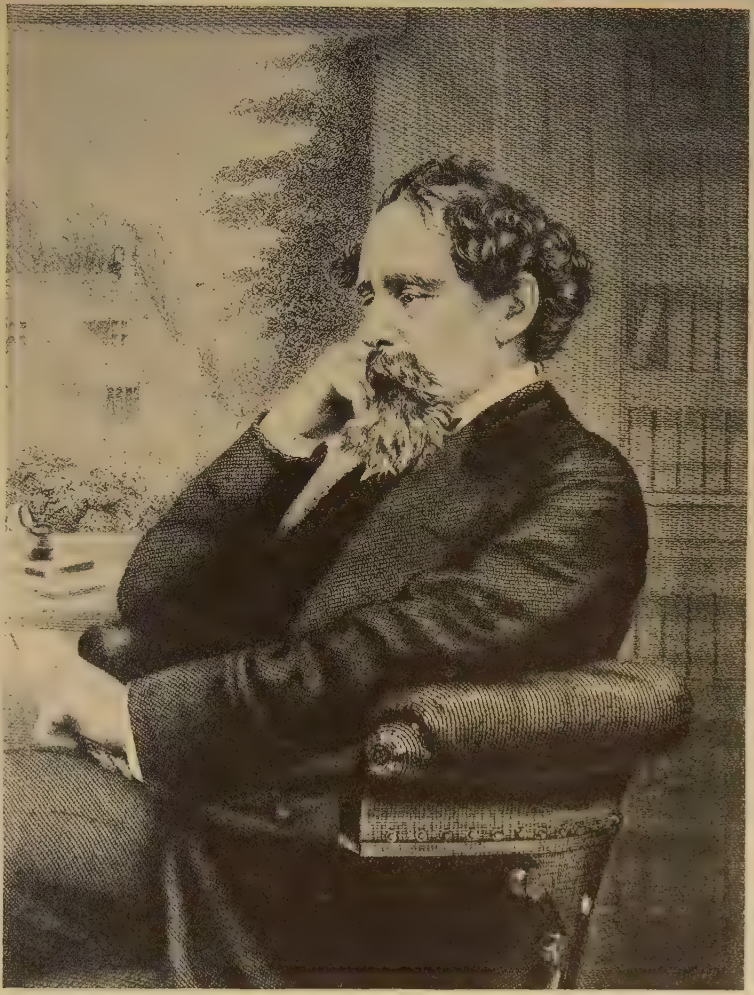
Stole a maiden from her place,
  Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took a face-cloth from the face;
  Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
  Set his child upon her knee—
Like summer tempest came her tears—
  "Sweet my child, I live for thee."

CHARLES DICKENS

TO begin my life with the beginning of my life," Dickens makes one of his heroes say, "I record that I was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night." Dickens was born on a Friday, the date the 7th of February, 1812, the place Landport in Portsea, England. The house was a comfortable one, and during Charles's early childhood his surroundings were prosperous; for his father, John Dickens, a clerk in the navy pay-office, was temporarily in easy circumstances. When Charles was but two, the family moved to London, taking lodgings for a time in Norfolk Street, Bloomsbury, and finally settling in Chatham. Here they lived in comfort, and here Charles gained more than the rudiments of an education, his earliest teacher being his mother, who instructed him not only in English, but in Latin also. Later he became the pupil of Mr. Giles, who seems to have taken in him an extraordinary interest.

Indeed, he was a child in whom it was difficult not to take an extraordinary interest. Small for his years, and attacked occasionally by a sort of spasm which was exceedingly painful, he was not fitted for much active exercise; but the *aliveness* which was apparent in him all his life distinguished him now. He was very fond of reading, and in *David Copperfield* he put into the mouth of his hero a



Charles Dickens
1812–1870

description of his own delight in certain books. "My father had left a small collection of books in a little room upstairs, to which I had access (for it adjoined my own), and which nobody else in our house ever troubled. From that blessed little room, *Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, The Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas* and *Robinson Crusoe* came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, ... they, and the *Arabian Nights* and the *Tales of the Genii*—and did me no harm; for whatever harm was in some of them was not there for me; I knew nothing of it. . . . . . . I have been Tom Jones (a child's Tom Jones, a harmless creature) for a week together. I have sustained my own idea of Roderick Random for a month at a stretch, I verily believe. I had a greedy relish for a few volumes of Voyages and Travels—I forget what, now—that were on those shelves; and for days and days I can remember to have gone about my region of our house, armed with the center piece out of an old set of boot-trees—the perfect realization of Captain Somebody, of the Royal British Navy, in danger of being beset by savages, and resolved to sell his life at a great price."

Not only did the little Charles read all he could lay hands upon; he made up stories, too, which he told to his small playmates, winning thereby their wondering admiration. Some of these tales he wrote down, and thus he became an author in a small way while he was yet a very small boy. His making believe to be the characters out of books shows another trait which clung to him all his life—his fondness for "play-acting." It was, in fact, often said of the mature Dickens that he would have made as good an actor as he was a novelist, and Dickens's father seems to have recognized in his little son decided traces of ability; for often, when there was company at the house, little Charles, with his face flushed and his eyes shining, would be placed on a table to sing a comic song, amid the applause of all present.

His early days were thus very happy; but when he was about eleven years old, money difficulties beset the family, and they were obliged to move to a poor part of London. Mrs. Dickens made persistent efforts to open a school for young ladies, but no one ever showed the slightest intention of coming. Matters went from bad to worse, and finally Mr. Dickens was arrested for debt and taken to the Marshalsea prison. The time that followed was a most painful one to the sensitive boy—far more painful, it would seem, than to the "Prodigal Father," as Dickens later called him. This father, whom Dickens long afterward described, in *David Copperfield,* as Mr. Micawber, was, as his son was always most willing to testify, a kind, generous man; but he was improvident to the last degree; and when in difficulties which would have made melancholy any other man, he was able, by the mere force of his rhetoric, to lift himself above circumstances or to make himself happy in them.

At length all the family except the oldest sister, who was at school, and Charles, went to live in the prison; and Charles was given work in a blacking-warehouse of which a relative of his mother's was manager. The sufferings which the boy endured at this time were intense. It was not only that the work was sordid, monotonous, uncongenial; it was not only that his pride was outraged; what hurt him most of all was that he should have been "so easily cast away at such an age," and that "no one made any sign." He had always yearned for an education; he had always felt that he must grow up to be worth something. And to see himself condemned, as he felt with the hopelessness of childhood, for life, to the society of such boys as he found in the blacking-warehouse, was almost more than he could endure. During his later life, prosperous and happy, he could scarcely bear to speak, even to his dearest friends, of this period of his life.

Though this period of his life seemed to him long, it was not really so, for he was not yet thirteen when he was taken from the warehouse and sent to school. Once given a chance, he learned rapidly and easily, although in all probability the schools to which he went were not of the best. After a year or two at school he again began work, but this time under more hopeful circumstances. He was, to be sure, but an under-clerk—little more than an office-boy in a solicitor's office; but at least the surroundings were less sordid and the companions more congenial. However, he had no intention of remaining an under-clerk, and he set to work to make himself a reporter.

Of his difficulties in mastering shorthand he has written feelingly in that novel which contains so much autobiographical material—*David Copperfield*. "I bought an approved scheme of the noble art and mystery of stenography . . . and plunged into a sea of perplexity that brought me, in a few weeks, to the confines of distraction. The changes that were rung upon dots, which in such a position meant such a thing, and in such another position something else, entirely different; the wonderful vagaries that were played by circles; the unaccountable consequences that resulted from marks like flies' legs, the tremendous effect of a curve in the wrong place; not only troubled my waking hours, but reappeared before me in my sleep."

When Dickens once made up his mind to do a thing, however, he always went through with it, and before so very long he had perfected himself in his "art and mystery," and was one of the most rapid and accurate reporters in London.

At nineteen he became a reporter of the speeches in Parliament. Before taking up his newspaper work, he made an attempt to go upon the stage; but it was not long before he found his true vocation, and abandoned all thought of the stage as a means of livelihood. In 1833 he published a sketch in the *Old Monthly Magazine,* and this was the first of those *Sketches by Boz* which were published at intervals for the next two years.

The year 1836 was a noteworthy one for Dickens, for in that year he married Catherine Hogarth, the daughter of an associate on the *Chronicle;* and in that year began the publication of *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club.* The publication of the first few numbers wakened no great enthusiasm, but with the appearance of the fifth number, in which Sam Weller is introduced, began that popularity which did not decline until Dickens's death. In fact, as one writer has said, "In dealing with Dickens, we are dealing with a man whose public success was a marvel and almost a monstrosity."

Every one, old and young, serious and flippant, talked of *Pickwick,* and it was actually reported, by no less an authority than Thomas Carlyle, that a solemn clergyman, being told that he had not long to live, exclaimed, "Well, thank God, *Pickwick* will be out in ten days anyway!"

Oliver Twist followed, and then *Nicholas Nickleby;* and by this time Dickens began to get, what he did not receive from his first work, something like his fair share of the enormous profits, so that his growing family lived in comfort, if not in luxury. When the *Old Curiosity Shop,* and, later, *Barnaby Rudge,* appeared, the number of purchasers of the serials rose as high as seventy thousand.

Early in 1842 Dickens and his wife made a journey to America, leaving their children in the care of a friend. Shortly after arriving in the United States he wrote to a friend, "I can give you no conception of my welcome here. There was never a king or emperor upon the earth so cheered and followed by crowds, and entertained in public at splendid balls and dinners, and waited on by public bodies and deputations of all kinds;" and again, "In every town where we stay, though it be only for a day, we hold a regular levee or drawing-room, where I shake hands on an average with five or six hundred people."

Dickens had come prepared to like America and Americans—and in many ways he did like them. But in other ways he was disappointed. He ventured to object, in various speeches, to the pirating, in America, of English literature, and fierce were the denunciations which this course drew upon him. Having fancied that in the republic of America he might have at least free speech on a matter which so closely concerned him, Dickens resented this treatment, and the Americans resented his resentment. However, it was with the kindliest feelings toward the many friends he had made in the United States, and with the most out-spoken admiration for many American institutions that he left for England. The publication of his *American Notes* and of *Martin Chuzzlewit* did not tend to reconcile Americans to Dickens; but there seems to have been no falling off in the sale of his books in this country.

Dickens's life, like the lives of most literary men, was not particularly eventful. It was, however, a constantly busy life. Book followed book in rapid succession, and still their popularity grew. Sometimes in London, sometimes in Italy or Rome or Switzerland, he created those wonderful characters of his which will live as long as the English language. The first of the Christmas books, *A Christmas Carol,* appeared in 1843, and henceforward one of the things to which people looked forward at Yuletide was the publication of a new Dickens Christmas story.

One diversion—if diversion it can be called—Dickens allowed himself not infrequently, and enjoyed most thoroughly. This was the production, sometimes before a selected audience, sometimes in public, of plays, in which Dickens himself usually took the chief part. Often these plays were given not only in London, but in various parts of the country, as benefits for poor authors or actors, or for the widows and families of such; and always they were astonishingly successful. It is reported that an old stage prompter or property man said one time to Dickens "Lor, Mr. Dickens! If it hadn't been for them books, what an actor you would have made."

Naturally, a man of Dickens's eminence had as his friends and acquaintances many of the foremost men of his time, and a most affectionate and delightful friend he was. His letters fall no whit below the best of his writing in his novels in their power of observation, their brightness, their humorous manner of expression.

In 1849 was begun the publication of *David Copperfield,* Dickens's own favorite among his novels. It contains, as has already been said, much that is autobiographical, and one of the most interesting facts in connection with this phase of it is that there really was, in Dickens's young days, a "Dora" whom he worshiped. Years later he met her again, and what his feelings on that occasion must have been may be imagined when we know that this Dora-grown-older was the original of "Flora" in *Little Dorrit.*

The things that Dickens, writing constantly and copiously, found time to do are wonderful. One of the matters in which he took great interest and an active part was the children's theatricals. These were held each year during the Christmas holiday season at Dickens's home, and while his children and their friends were the principal actors, Dickens superintended the whole, introduced three-quarters of the fun, and played grown-up parts, adopting as his stage title the "Modern Garrick."

Though the story of these crowded years is quickly told, the years were far from being uneventful in their passing. Occasional sojourns, either with his family or with friends, in France and in Italy always made Dickens but the more glad to be in his beloved London, where he seemed most in his element and where his genius had freest play. This does not mean that he did not enjoy France and Italy, or appreciate their beauties, but simply that he was always an Englishman—a city Englishman. His observations, however, on what he saw in traveling were always most acute and entertaining.

His account of his well-nigh unsuccessful attempt to find the house of Mr. Lowther, English chargé d'affaires at Naples, with whom he had been invited to dine, may be quoted here to show his power of humorous description:

"We had an exceedingly pleasant dinner of eight, preparatory to which I was near having the ridiculous adventure of not being able to find the house and coming back dinnerless. I went in an open carriage from the hotel in all state, and the coachman, to my surprise, pulled up at the end of the Chiaja.

" 'Behold the house' says he, 'of Signor Larthoor!'—at the same time pointing with his whip into the seventh heaven, where the early stars were shining.

" 'But the Signor Larthoor,' returns the Inimitable darling, 'lives at Pausilippo.'

" 'It is true,' says the coachman (still pointing to the evening star), 'but he lives high up the Salita Sant' Antonio, where no carriage ever yet ascended, and that is the house' (evening star as aforesaid), 'and one must go on foot. Behold the Salita Sant' Antonio!'

"I went up it, a mile and a half I should think. I got into the strangest places, among the wildest Neapolitans—kitchens, washing-places, archways, stables, vineyards—was baited by dogs, answered in profoundly unintelligible Neapolitan, from behind lonely locked doors, in cracked female voices, quaking with fear; could hear of no such Englishman or any Englishman. By-and-by I came upon a Polenta-shop in the clouds, where an old Frenchman, with an umbrella like a faded tropical leaf (it had not rained for six weeks) was staring at nothing at all, with a snuff-box in his hand. To him I appealed concerning the Signor Larthoor.

" 'Sir,' said he, with the sweetest politeness, 'can you speak French?'

" 'Sir,' said I, 'a little.'

" 'Sir,' said he, 'I presume the Signor Lootheere'—you will observe that he changed the name according to the custom of his country— 'is an Englishman.'

"I admitted that he was the victim of circumstances and had that misfortune.

" 'Sir,' said he, 'one word more. *Has* he a servant with a wooden leg?'

" 'Great Heaven, sir,' said I, 'how do I know? I should think not, but it is possible.'

" 'It is always,' said the Frenchman, 'possible. Almost all the things of the world are always possible.'

" 'Sir,' said I—you may imagine my condition and dismal sense of my own absurdity by this time—'that is true.'

"He then took an immense pinch of snuff, wiped the dust off his umbrella, led me to an arch commanding a wonderful view of the Bay of Naples, and pointed deep into the earth from which I had mounted.

" 'Below there, near the lamp, one finds an Englishman, with a servant with a wooden leg. It is always possible that he is the Signor Lootheere.'

"I had been asked at six, and it was now getting on for seven. I went down again in a state of perspiration and misery not to be described, and without the faintest hope of finding the place. But as I was going down to the lamp, I saw the strangest staircase up a dark corner, with a man in a white waistcoat (evidently hired) standing on the top of it fuming. I dashed in at a venture, found it was the place, made the most of the whole story, and was indescribably popular."

"Indescribably popular" Dickens was almost every place he went. And in 1858 there came to him increased popularity by reason of a new venture. In this year he began his public readings from his own works, which brought him in immense sums of money. Through England, Scotland, Ireland and the United States he journeyed, reading, as only he could read, scenes humorous and pathetic from his great novels, and everywhere the effect was the same.

Descriptive of an evening at Edinburgh, he wrote: "Such a pouring of hundreds into a place already full to the throat, such indescribable confusion, such a rending and tearing of dresses, and yet such a scene of good humor on the whole! . . . I read with the platform crammed with people. I got them to lie down upon it, and it was like some impossible tableau or gigantic picnic; one pretty girl in full dress lying on her side all night, holding on to one of the legs of my table. And yet from the moment I began to the moment of my leaving off, they never missed a point, and they ended with a burst of cheers."

Meanwhile Dickens's domestic life had not been happy. He and his wife were not entirely congenial in temper, and the incompatibility increased with the years, until in 1858 they agreed to live apart. Most of the children remained with their father, although they were given perfect freedom to visit their mother.

Among Dickens's later novels are the *Tale of Two Cities, Great Expectations,* which is one of his very best books, and *Our Mutual Friend,* which, while as a story it has many faults, yet abounds with the humor and fancy which are characteristic of Dickens. In October, 1869, was begun *Edwin Drood,* which was published like most of its predecessors, as a serial. Six numbers appeared, and there the story closed; for on June 9, 1870, Charles Dickens died, after an illness of but one day, during all of which he was unconscious.

His family desired to have him buried near his home, the Gad's Hill which he had admired from his childhood and had purchased in his manhood; but the general wish was that he should be laid in Westminster Abbey, and to this wish his family felt that it would be wrong to object. For days there were crowds of mourners about the grave, shedding tears, scattering flowers, testifying to the depth of affection they had felt for the man who had given them so many happy hours.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Charles Dickens

STAVE ONE

Marley's Ghost

MARLEY was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it: and Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the Country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Scrooge knew he was dead? Of course he did. How could it be otherwise? Scrooge and he were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary legatee, his sole friend and sole mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event, but that he was an excellent man of business on the very day of the funeral, and solemnized it with an undoubted bargain.

The mention of Marley's funeral brings me back to the point I started from. There is no doubt that Marley was dead. This must be distinctly understood, or nothing wonderful can come of the story I am going to relate. If we were not perfectly convinced that Hamlet's Father died before the play began, there would be nothing more remarkable in his taking a stroll at night, in an easterly wind, upon his own ramparts, than there would be in any other middle-aged gentleman rashly turning out after dark in a breezy spot—say Saint Paul's Churchyard for instance—literally to astonish his son's weak mind.

Scrooge never painted out Old Marley's name. There it stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door: Scrooge and Marley. The firm was known as Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge and sometimes Marley, but he answered to both names: it was all the same to him.

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had even struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, nor wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?" No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men's dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, "No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!"

But what did Scrooge care? It was the very thing he liked. To edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance, was what the knowing ones call "nuts" to Scrooge.

Once upon a time—of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve—old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather: foggy withal: and he could hear the people in the court outside go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement stones to warm them. The City clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already: it had not been light all day: and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighboring offices, like ruddy smears upon the palpable brown air. The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole, and was so dense without, that although the court was of the narrowest, the houses opposite were mere phantoms. To see the dingy cloud come drooping down, obscuring everything, one might have thought that Nature lived hard by, and was brewing on a large scale.[1]

The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open that he might keep his eye upon his clerk, who in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. But he couldn't replenish it, for Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room; and so surely as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter, and tried to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of strong imagination, he failed.

"A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!" cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge's nephew, who came upon him so quickly that this was the first intimation he had of his approach.

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[1] The fogs of London are famous. A genuine London fog seems not like the heavy gray mist which we know as a fog, but, as Dickens says, like "palpable brown air." So dense is this brown air at times that all traffic is obliged to cease, for not even those best acquainted with the geography of the city can find their way about.

"Bah!" said Scrooge. "Humbug!"

He had so heated himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge's, that he was all in a glow; his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again.

"Christmas a humbug, uncle!" said Scrooge's nephew. "You don't mean that, I am sure."

"I do," said Scrooge. "Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough."

"Come, then," returned the nephew gaily. "What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough."

Scrooge having no better answer ready on the spur of the moment, said, "Bah!" again; and followed it up with "Humbug."

"Don't be cross, uncle," said the nephew.

"What else can I be," returned the uncle, "when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen months presented dead against you? If I could work my will," said Scrooge, indignantly, "every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"

"Uncle!" pleaded the nephew.

"Nephew!" returned the uncle, sternly, "keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."

"Keep it!" repeated Scrooge's nephew. "But you don't keep it."

"Let me leave it alone, then," said Scrooge. "Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!"

"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say," returned the nephew: "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!"

The clerk in the Tank involuntarily applauded: becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he poked the fire, and extinguished the last frail spark for ever.

"Let me hear another sound from *you,*" said Scrooge, "and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation. You're quite a powerful speaker, Sir," he added, turning to his nephew. "I wonder you don't go into Parliament."

"Don't be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us to-morrow."

Scrooge said that he would see him——yes, indeed he did. He went the whole length of the expression, and said that he would see him in that extremity first.

"But why?" cried Scrooge's nephew. "Why?"

"Why did you get married?" said Scrooge.

"Because I fell in love."

"Because you fell in love!" growled Scrooge, as if that were the only one thing in the world more ridiculous than a merry Christmas. "Good afternoon!"

"Nay, uncle, but you never came to see me before that happened. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?"

"Good afternoon," said Scrooge.

"I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?"

"Good afternoon," said Scrooge.

"I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humour to the last. So A Merry Christmas, uncle!"

"Good afternoon!" said Scrooge.

"And A Happy New Year!"

"Good afternoon!" said Scrooge.

His nephew left the room without an angry word, notwithstanding. He stopped at the outer door to bestow the greetings of the season on the clerk, who, cold as he was, was warmer than Scrooge; for he returned them cordially.

"There's another fellow," muttered Scrooge; who overheard him: "my clerk, with fifteen shillings a week, and a wife and family, talking about a merry Christmas. I'll retire to Bedlam."[2]

This lunatic, in letting Scrooge's nephew out, had let two other people in. They were portly gentlemen, pleasant to behold, and now stood, with their hats off, in Scrooge's office. They had books and papers in their hands, and bowed to him.

"Scrooge and Marley's, I believe," said one of the gentlemen, referring to his list. "Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge, or Mr. Marley?"

"Mr. Marley has been dead these seven years," Scrooge replied. "He died seven years ago, this very night."

"We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner," said the gentleman, presenting his credentials.

It certainly was; for they had been two kindred spirits. At the ominous word "liberality," Scrooge frowned, and shook his head, and handed the credentials back.

"At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge," said the gentleman, taking up a pen, "it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessaries; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, Sir."

"Are there no prisons?" asked Scrooge.

"Plenty of prisons," said the gentleman, laying down the pen again.

[2] *Bedlam* is the name of a famous asylum for lunatics, in London. In former times the treatment of the inmates was far from humane, but at the present time the management is excellent, and a large proportion of the inmates are cured.

"And the Union workhouses?"[3] demanded Scrooge. "Are they still in operation?"

"They are. Still," returned the gentleman, "I wish I could say they were not."

"The Treadmill[4] and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?" said Scrooge.

"Both very busy, Sir."

"Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course," said Scrooge. "I'm very glad to hear it."

"Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude," returned the gentleman, "a few of us are endeavoring to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when want is keenly felt, and abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?"

"Nothing!" Scrooge replied.

"You wish to be anonymous?"

"I wish to be left alone," said Scrooge. "Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there."

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[3] Workhouses are establishments where paupers are cared for, a certain amount of labor being expected from those who are able.

[4] In England formerly there existed a device for the punishment of prisoners which was known as the *treadmill*. A huge wheel, usually in the form of a long hollow cylinder, was provided with steps about its circumference, and made to revolve by the weight of the prisoner as he moved from step to step.

"Many can't go there; and many would rather die."

"If they would rather die," said Scrooge, "they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides—excuse me—I don't know that."

"But you might know it," observed the gentleman.

"It's not my business," Scrooge returned. "It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen!"

Seeing clearly that it would be useless to pursue their point, the gentlemen withdrew. Scrooge resumed his labours with an improved opinion of himself, and in more facetious temper than was usual with him.

Meanwhile the fog and darkness thickened so, that the people ran about with flaring links,[5] proffering their services to go before horses in carriages, and conduct them on their way. The ancient tower of a church, whose gruff old bell was always peeping slily down at Scrooge out of a gothic window in the wall, became invisible, and struck the hours and quarters in the clouds, with tremulous vibrations afterwards as if its teeth were chattering in its frozen head up there. The cold became intense. In the main street at the corner of the court, some labourers were repairing the gas-pipes, and had lighted a great fire in a brazier, round which a party of ragged men and boys were gathered: warming their hands and winking their eyes before the blaze in rapture. The water-plug being left in solitude, its overflowings sullenly congealed, and turned to misanthropic ice. The brightness of the shop where holly sprigs and berries crackled in the lamp heat of the windows, made pale faces ruddy as they passed. Poulterers' and grocers' trades became a splendid joke: a glorious pageant, with which it was next to impossible to believe that such dull principles as bargain and sale had anything to do. The Lord Mayor, in the stronghold of the mighty Mansion House, gave orders to his fifty cooks and butlers to keep Christmas as a Lord Mayor's household should; and even the little tailor, whom he had fined five shillings on the previous Monday for being drunk and bloodthirsty in the streets, stirred up to-morrow's pudding in his garret, while his lean wife and the baby sallied out to buy the beef.

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[5] Links are torches made of tow and pitch. In the days before the invention of street lights, they were in common use in England, and they are still seen during the dense London fogs.

Foggier yet, and colder! Piercing, searching, biting cold. If the good Saint Dunstan[6] had but nipped the Evil Spirit's nose with a touch of such weather as that, instead of using his familiar weapons, then indeed he would have roared to lusty purpose. The owner of one scant young nose, gnawed and mumbled by the hungry cold as bones are gnawed by dogs, stooped down at Scrooge's keyhole to regale him with a Christmas carol: but at the first sound of

"God bless you, merry gentlemen!
May nothing you dismay!"[7]

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[6] Saint Dunstan was an English archbishop and statesman who lived in the tenth century.

[7] This is one of the best-known and oftenest-sung of Christmas carols. In many parts of England, parties of men and boys go about for several nights before Christmas singing carols before people's houses. These troops of singers are known as "waits."

Scrooge seized the ruler with such energy of action, that the singer fled in terror, leaving the keyhole to the fog and even more congenial frost.

At length the hour of shutting up the counting-house arrived. With an ill-will Scrooge dismounted

THE CLERK SMILED FAINTLY

from his stool, and tacitly admitted the fact to the expectant clerk in the Tank, who instantly snuffed his candle out, and put on his hat.

"You'll want all day to-morrow, I suppose?" said Scrooge.

"If quite convenient, Sir."

"It's not convenient," said Scrooge, "and it's not fair. If I was to stop half-a-crown for it, you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound?"

The clerk smiled faintly.

"And yet," said Scrooge, "you don't think *me* ill-used, when I pay a day's wages for no work."

The clerk observed that it was only once a year.

"A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December!" said Scrooge, buttoning his great-coat to the chin. "But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning!"

The clerk promised that he would; and Scrooge walked out with a growl. The office was closed in a twinkling, and the clerk, with the long ends of his white comforter dangling below his waist (for he boasted no great-coat), went down a slide on Cornhill, at the end of a lane of boys, twenty times, in honour of its being Christmas Eve, and then ran home to Camden Town as hard as he could pelt, to play at blindman's-buff.

Scrooge took his melancholy dinner in his usual melancholy tavern; and having read all the newspapers, and beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's-book, went home to bed. He lived in chambers which had once belonged to his deceased partner. They were a gloomy suite of rooms, in a lowering pile of building up a yard, where it had so little business to be, that one could scarcely help fancying it must have run there when it was a young house, playing at hide-and-seek with other houses, and have forgotten the way out again. It was old enough now, and dreary enough, for nobody lived in it but Scrooge, the other rooms being all let out as offices. The yard was so dark that even Scrooge, who knew its every stone, was fain to grope with his hands. The fog and frost so hung about the black old gateway of the house, that it seemed as if the Genius of the Weather sat in mournful meditation on the threshold. Now, it is a fact, that there was nothing at all particular about the knocker on the door, except that it was very large. It is also a fact, that Scrooge had seen it, night and morning, during his whole residence in that place; also that Scrooge had as little of what is called fancy about him as any man in the City of London, even including—which is a bold word—the corporation, aldermen, and livery. Let it also be borne in mind that Scrooge had not bestowed one thought on Marley, since his last mention of his seven-years' dead partner that afternoon. And then let any man explain to me, if he can, how it happened that Scrooge, having his key in the lock of the door, saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any intermediate process of change, not a knocker, but Marley's face.

Marley's face. It was not in impenetrable shadow as the other objects in the yard were, but had a dismal light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar. It was not angry or ferocious, but looked at Scrooge as Marley used to look: with ghostly spectacles turned up on its ghostly forehead. The hair was curiously stirred, as if by breath or hot air; and, though the eyes were wide open, they were perfectly motionless. That, and its livid colour, made it horrible; but its horror seemed to be in spite of the face and beyond its control, rather than a part of its own expression.

As Scrooge looked fixedly at this phenomenon, it was a knocker again.

To say that he was not startled, or that his blood was not conscious of a terrible sensation to which it had been a stranger from infancy, would be untrue. But he put his hand upon the key he had relinquished, turned it sturdily, walked in, and lighted his candle.

He *did* pause, with a moment's irresolution, before he shut the door; and he *did* look cautiously behind it first, as if he half expected to be terrified with the sight of Marley's pigtail sticking out into the hall. But there was nothing on the back of the door, except the screws and nuts that held the knocker on; so he said "Pooh, pooh!" and closed it with a bang.

The sound resounded through the house like thunder. Every room above, and every cask in the wine-merchant's cellars below, appeared to have a separate peal of echoes of its own. Scrooge was not a man to be frightened by echoes. He fastened the door, and walked across the hall, and up the stairs, slowly too, trimming his candle as he went.

You may talk vaguely about driving a coach-and-six up a good old flight of stairs, or through a bad young Act of Parliament; but I mean to say you might have got a hearse up that staircase, and taken it broadwise, with the splinter-bar[8] towards the wall, and the door towards the balustrades: and done it easy. There was plenty of width for that, and room to spare; which is perhaps the reason why Scrooge thought he saw a locomotive hearse

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8. The splinter-bar is the cross-bar of a vehicle, to which the traces of the horses are fastened.

going on before him in the gloom. Half-a-dozen gas-lamps out of the street wouldn't have lighted the entry too well, so you may suppose that it was pretty dark with Scrooge's dip.

Up Scrooge went, not caring a button for that: darkness is cheap, and Scrooge liked it. But before he shut his heavy door, he walked through his rooms to see that all was right. He had just enough recollection of the face to desire to do that.

Sitting-room, bedroom, lumber-room. All as they should be. Nobody under the table, nobody under the sofa; a small fire in the grate; spoon and basin ready; and the little saucepan of gruel (Scrooge had a cold in his head) upon the hob. Nobody under the bed; nobody in the closet; nobody in his dressing-gown, which was hanging up in a suspicious attitude against the wall. Lumber-room as usual. Old fire-guard, old shoes, two fish-baskets, washing-stand on three legs, and a poker.

Quite satisfied, he closed his door, and locked himself in; double-locked himself in, which was not his custom. Thus secured against surprise, he took off his cravat; put on his dressing-gown and slippers, and his nightcap; and sat down before the fire to take his gruel.

It was a very low fire indeed; nothing on such a bitter night. He was obliged to sit close to it, and brood over it, before he could extract the least sensation of warmth from such a handful of fuel. The fireplace was an old one, built by some Dutch merchant long ago, and paved all round with quaint Dutch tiles, designed to illustrate the Scriptures. There were Cains and Abels, Pharaoh's daughters, Queens of Sheba, angelic messengers descending through the air on clouds like feather-beds, Abrahams, Belshazzars, Apostles putting off to sea in butter-boats, hundreds of figures, to attract his thoughts; and yet that face of Marley, seven years dead, came like the ancient Prophet's rod, and swallowed up the whole. If each smooth tile had been a blank at first, with power to shape some picture on its surface, from the disjointed fragments of his thoughts, there would have been a copy of old Marley's head on every one.

"Humbug!" said Scrooge; and walked across the room.

After several turns, he sat down again. As he threw his head back in the chair, his glance happened to rest upon a bell, a disused bell, that hung in the room, and communicated for some purpose now forgotten with a chamber in the highest story of the building. It was with great astonishment, and with a strange, inexplicable dread, that as he looked, he saw this bell begin to swing. It swung so softly in the outset that it scarcely made a sound; but soon it rang out loudly, and so did every bell in the house. This might have lasted half a minute, or a minute, but it seemed an hour. The bells ceased as they had begun, together. They were succeeded by a clanking noise, deep down below; as if some person were dragging a heavy chain over the casks in the wine-merchant's cellar. Scrooge then remembered to have heard that ghosts in haunted houses were described as dragging chains.

The cellar-door flew open with a booming sound, and then he heard the noise much louder, on the floors below; then coming up the stairs; then coming straight towards his door.

"It's humbug still!" said Scrooge. "I won't believe it."

His colour changed though, when, without a pause, it came on through the heavy door, and passed into the room before his eyes. Upon its coming in, the flame leaped up, as though it cried "I know him! Marley's Ghost!" and fell again.

The same face: the very same. Marley in his pigtail, usual waistcoat, tights and boots; the tassels on the latter bristling, like his pigtail, and his coat-skirts, and the hair upon his head. The chain he drew was clasped about his middle. It was long, and wound about him like a tail; and it was made (for Scrooge observed it closely) of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel. His body was transparent; so that Scrooge, observing him, and looking through his waistcoat, could see the two buttons on his coat behind.

Scrooge had often heard it said that Marley had no bowels,[9] but he had never believed it until now.

No, nor did he believe it even now. Though he looked the phantom through and through, and saw it standing before him; though he felt the chilling influence of its death-cold eyes; and marked the very texture of the folded kerchief bound about its head and chin, which wrapper he had not observed before: he was still incredulous, and fought against his senses.

"How now!" said Scrooge, caustic and cold as ever. "What do you want with me?"

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[9] There is a play on the word *bowels* here. What Scrooge had heard said of Marley was that he had no bowels of compassion—that is, no pity.

"Much!"—Marley's voice, no doubt about it.

"Who are you?"

"Ask me who I *was.*"

"Who *were* you then?" said Scrooge, raising his voice. "You're particular—for a shade." He was going to say "*to* a shade," but substituted this, as more appropriate.

"In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley."

"Can you—can you sit down?" asked Scrooge, looking doubtfully at him.

"I can."

"Do it then."

Scrooge asked the question, because he didn't know whether a ghost so transparent might find himself in a condition to take a chair; and felt that in the event of its being impossible, it might involve the necessity of an embarrassing explanation. But the Ghost sat down on the opposite side of the fireplace, as if he were quite used to it.

"You don't believe in me," observed the Ghost.

"I don't," said Scrooge.

"What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your senses?"

"I don't know," said Scrooge.

"Why do you doubt your senses?"

"Because," said Scrooge, "a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!"

Scrooge was not much in the habit of cracking jokes, nor did he feel, in his heart, by any means waggish then. The truth is, that he tried to be smart, as a means of distracting his own attention, and keeping down his terror; for the spectre's voice disturbed the very marrow in his bones.

To sit staring at those fixed, glazed eyes in silence for a moment, would play, Scrooge felt, the very deuce with him. There was something very awful, too, in the spectre's being provided with an infernal atmosphere of its own. Scrooge could not feel it himself, but this was clearly the case; for though the Ghost sat perfectly motionless, its hair, and

"IN LIFE I WAS YOUR PARTNER, JACOB MARLEY" skirts, and tassels, were still agitated as by the hot vapour from an oven.

"You see this toothpick?" said Scrooge, returning quickly to the charge, for the reason just assigned; and wishing, though it were only for a second, to divert the vision's stony gaze from himself.

"I do," replied the Ghost.

"You are not looking at it," said Scrooge.

"But I see it," said the Ghost, "notwithstanding."

"Well!" returned Scrooge. "I have but to swallow this, and be for the rest of my days persecuted by a legion of goblins, all of my own creation. Humbug, I tell you—humbug!"

At this the spirit raised a frightful cry, and shook its chain with such a dismal and appalling noise, that Scrooge held on tight to his chair, to save himself from falling in a swoon. But how much greater was his horror, when, the phantom taking off the bandage round its head, as if it were too warm to wear indoors, its lower jaw dropped down upon its breast!"

Scrooge fell upon his knees, and clasped his hands before his face.

"Mercy!" he said. "Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?"

"Man of the worldly mind!" replied the Ghost, "do you believe in me or not?"

"I do," said Scrooge. "I must. But why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?"

"It is required of every man," the Ghost returned, "that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world—oh, woe is me!—and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!"

Again the spectre raised a cry, and shook its chain, and wrung its shadowy hands.

"You are fettered," said Scrooge, trembling. "Tell me why?"

"I wear the chain I forged in life," replied the Ghost. "I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I bore it. Is its pattern strange to *you*?"

Scrooge trembled more and more.

"Or would you know," pursued the Ghost, "the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have laboured on it, since. It is a ponderous chain!"

Scrooge glanced about him on the floor, in the expectation of finding himself surrounded by some fifty or sixty fathoms of iron cable: but he could see nothing.

"Jacob," he said, imploringly. "Old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob."

"I have none to give," the Ghost replied. "It comes from other regions, Ebenezer Scrooge, and is conveyed by other ministers, to other kinds of men. Nor can I tell you what I would. A very little more, is all permitted to me. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. My spirit never walked beyond our counting-house—mark me!—in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole and weary journeys lie before me!"

It was a habit with Scrooge, whenever he became thoughtful, to put his hands in his breeches pockets. Pondering on what the Ghost had said, he did so now, but without lifting his eyes, or getting off his knees. "You must have been very slow about it, Jacob," Scrooge observed, in a business-like manner, though with humility and deference.

"Slow!" the Ghost repeated.

"Seven years dead," mused Scrooge. "And travelling all the time!"

"The whole time," said the Ghost. "No rest, no peace. Incessant torture of remorse."

"You travel fast?" said Scrooge.

"On the wings of the wind," replied the Ghost.

"You might have got over a great quantity of ground in seven years," said Scrooge.

The Ghost, on hearing this, set up another cry, and clanked its chain so hideously in the dead silence of the night, that the Ward would have been justified in indicting it for a nuisance.

"Oh! captive, bound, and double-ironed," cried the phantom, "not to know, that ages of incessant labour, by immortal creatures, for this earth must pass into eternity before the good of which it is susceptible is all developed. Not to know that any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be, will find its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunity misused! Yet such was I! Oh! such was I!"

"But you were always a good man of business, Jacob," faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.

"Business!" cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. "Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!"

It held up its chain at arm's length, as if that were the cause of all its unavailing grief, and flung it heavily upon the ground again.

"At this time of the rolling year," the spectre said, "I suffer most. Why did I walk through crowds of fellow-beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode! Were there no poor homes to which its light would have conducted *me?*"

Scrooge was very much dismayed to hear the spectre going on at this rate, and began to quake exceedingly.

"Hear me!" cried the Ghost. "My time is nearly gone."

"I will," said Scrooge. "But don't be hard upon me! Don't be flowery, Jacob! Pray!"

"How it is that I appear before you in a shape that you can see, I may not tell. I have sat invisible beside you many and many a day."

It was not an agreeable idea. Scrooge shivered, and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

"That is no light part of my penance," pursued the Ghost. "I am here to-night to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring, Ebenezer."

"You were always a good friend to me," said Scrooge. "Thank'ee!"

"You will be haunted," resumed the Ghost, "by Three Spirits."

Scrooge's countenance fell almost as low as the Ghost's had done.

"Is that the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob," he demanded, in a faltering voice.

"It is."

"I—I think I'd rather not," said Scrooge.

"Without their visits," said the Ghost, "you cannot hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first to-morrow, when the bell tolls one."

"Couldn't I take 'em all at once, and have it over, Jacob?" hinted Scrooge.

"Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third upon the next night when the last stroke of twelve has ceased to vibrate. Look to see me no more; and look that, for your own sake, you remember what has passed between us!"

When it had said these words, the spectre took its wrapper from the table, and bound it round its head, as before. Scrooge knew this, by the smart sound its teeth made, when the jaws were brought together by the bandage. He ventured to raise his eyes again, and found his supernatural visitor confronting him in an erect attitude, with its chain wound over and about its arm.

The apparition walked backward from him; and at every step it took, the window raised itself a little, so that when the spectre reached it, it was wide open. It beckoned Scrooge to approach, which he did. When they were within two paces of each other, Marley's Ghost held up its hand, warning him to come no nearer. Scrooge stopped.

Not so much in obedience, as in surprise and fear: for on the raising of the hand, he became sensible of confused noises in the air; incoherent sounds of lamentation and regret; wailings inexpressibly sorrowful and self-accusatory. The spectre, after listening for a moment, joined in the mournful dirge; and floated out upon the bleak, dark night.

Scrooge followed to the window: desperate in his curiosity. He looked out.

The air was filled with phantoms, wandering hither and thither in restless haste, and moaning as they went. Every one of them wore chains like Marley's Ghost; some few (they might be guilty governments) were linked together; none were free. Many had been personally known to Scrooge in their lives. He had been quite familiar with one old ghost, in a white waistcoat, with a monstrous iron safe attached to his ankle, who cried piteously at being unable to assist a wretched woman with an infant, whom it saw below upon a door-step. The misery with them all was, clearly, that they sought to interfere, for good, in human matters, and had lost the power for ever.

Whether these creatures faded into mist, or mist enshrouded them, he could not tell. But they and their spirit voices faded together; and the night became as it had been when he walked home.

Scrooge closed the window, and examined the door by which the Ghost had entered. It was double-locked, as he had locked it with his own hands, and the bolts were undisturbed. He tried to say "Humbug!" but stopped at the first syllable. And being, from the emotion he had undergone, or the fatigues of the day, or his glimpse of the Invisible World, or the dull conversation of the Ghost, or the lateness of the hour, much in need of repose; went straight to bed, without undressing, and fell asleep upon the instant.

STAVE TWO

The First of the Three Spirits

WHEN Scrooge awoke, it was so dark, that looking out of bed, he could scarcely distinguish the transparent window from the opaque walls of his chamber. He was endeavoring to pierce the darkness with his ferret eyes, when the chimes of a neighboring church struck the four quarters. So he listened for the hour.

To his great astonishment the heavy bell went on from six to seven, and from seven to eight, and regularly up to twelve; then stopped. Twelve! It was past two when he went to bed. The clock was wrong. An icicle must have got into the works. Twelve!

He touched the spring of his repeater, to correct this most preposterous clock. Its rapid little pulse beat twelve; and stopped.

"Why, it isn't possible," said Scrooge, "that I can have slept through a whole day and far into another night. It isn't possible that anything has happened to the sun, and this is twelve at noon!"

The big idea being an alarming one, he scrambled out of bed, and groped his way to the window. He was obliged to rub the frost off with the sleeve of his dressing-gown before he could see anything; and could see very little then. All he could make out was, that it was still very foggy and extremely cold, and that there was no noise of people running to and fro, and making a great stir, as there unquestionably would have been if night had beaten off bright day, and taken possession of the world. This was a great relief, because "three days after sight of this First of Exchange pay to Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge or his order," and so forth, would have become a mere United States' security if there were no days to count by.

Scrooge went to bed again, and thought, and thought, and thought it over and over and over, and could make nothing of it. The more he thought, the more perplexed he was; and the more he endeavoured not to think, the more he thought. Marley's Ghost bothered him exceedingly. Every time he resolved within himself, after mature inquiry, that it was all a dream, his mind flew back again, like a strong spring released, to its first position, and presented the same problem to be worked all through, "Was it a dream or not?"

Scrooge lay in this state until the chimes had gone three quarters more, when he remembered, on a sudden, that the Ghost had warned him of a visitation when the bell tolled one. He resolved to lie awake until the hour was passed; and, considering that he could no more go to sleep than go to Heaven, this was perhaps the wisest resolution in his power.

The quarter was so long, that he was more than once convinced he must have sunk into a doze unconsciously, and missed the clock. At length it broke upon his listening ear.

"Ding, dong!"

"A quarter past," said Scrooge, counting.

"Ding, dong!"

"Half-past!" said Scrooge.

"Ding, dong!"

"A quarter to it," said Scrooge.

"Ding, dong!"

"The hour itself," said Scrooge, triumphantly, "and nothing else!"

He spoke before the hour bell sounded, which it now did with a deep, dull, hollow, melancholy ONE. Light flashed up in the room upon the instant, and the curtains of his bed were drawn.

The curtains of his bed were drawn aside, I tell you, by a hand. Not the curtains at his feet, nor the curtains at his back, but those to which his face was addressed. The curtains of his bed were drawn aside; and Scrooge, starting up into a half-recumbent attitude, found himself face to face with the unearthly visitor who drew them: as close to it as I am now to you, and I am standing in the spirit at your elbow.

It was a strange figure—like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium, which gave him the appearance of having receded from the view, and being diminished to a child's proportions. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if its hold were of uncommon strength. Its legs and feet, most delicately formed, were, like those upper members, bare. It wore a tunic of the purest white; and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprang a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible; and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm.

Even this, though, when Scrooge looked at it with increasing steadiness, was *not* its strangest quality. For as its belt sparkled and glittered now in one part and now in another, and what was light one instant, at another time was dark, so the figure itself fluctuated in its distinctness: being now a thing with one arm, now with one leg, now with twenty legs, now a pair of legs without a head, now a head without a body: of which dissolving parts, no outline would be visible in the dense gloom wherein they melted away. And in the very wonder of this, it would be itself again; distinct and clear as ever.

"Are you the Spirit, Sir, whose coming was foretold to me?" asked Scrooge.

"I am!"

The voice was soft and gentle. Singularly low, as if instead of being so close beside him, it were at a distance.

"Who, and what are you?" Scrooge demanded.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Past."

"Long past?" inquired Scrooge, observant of its dwarfish stature.

"No. Your past."

Perhaps, Scrooge could not have told anybody why, if anybody could have asked him; but he had a special desire to see the Spirit in his cap; and begged him to be covered.

"What!" exclaimed the Ghost, "would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give? Is it not enough that you are one of those whose passions made this cap, and force me through whole trains of years to wear it low upon my brow!"

Scrooge reverently disclaimed all intention to offend, and then made bold to inquire what business brought him there.

"Your welfare!" said the Ghost.

Scrooge expressed himself much obliged, but could not help thinking that a night of unbroken rest would have been more conducive to that end. The spirit must have heard him thinking, for it said immediately: "Your reclamation, then. Take heed!"

It put out its strong hand as it spoke, and clasped him gently by the arm.

"Rise! and walk with me!"

It would have been in vain for Scrooge to plead that the weather and the hour were not adapted to pedestrian purposes; that bed was warm, and the thermometer a long way below freezing; that he was clad but lightly in his slippers, dressing-gown, and nightcap; and that he had a cold upon him at that time. The grasp, though gentle as a woman's hand, was not to be resisted. He rose: but finding that the Spirit made towards the window, clasped its robe in supplication.

"I am a mortal," Scrooge remonstrated, "and liable to fall."

"Bear but a touch of my hand *there*," said the Spirit, laying it upon his heart, "and you shall be upheld in more than this!" '

As the words were spoken, they passed through the wall, and stood upon an open country road, with fields on either hand. The city had entirely vanished. Not a vestige of it was to be seen. The darkness and the mist had vanished with it, for it was a clear, cold, winter day, with snow upon the ground.

"Good Heaven!" said Scrooge, clasping his hands together, as he looked about him. "I was bred in this place. I was a boy here!"

The Spirit gazed upon him mildly. Its gentle touch, though it had been light and instantaneous, appeared still present to the old man's sense of feeling. He was conscious of a thousand odors floating in the air, each one connected with a thousand thoughts, and hopes, and joys, and cares long, long forgotten!

"Your lip is trembling," said the Ghost. "And what is that upon your cheek?"

Scrooge muttered, with an unusual catching in his voice, that it was a pimple; and begged the Ghost to lead him where he would.

"You recollect the way?" inquired the Spirit.

"Remember it!" cried Scrooge with fervor—"I could walk it blindfold."

"Strange to have forgotten it for so many years!" observed the Ghost. "Let us go on."

They walked along the road; Scrooge recognizing every gate, and post, and tree; until a little market-town appeared in the distance, with its bridge, its church, and winding river. Some shaggy ponies now were seen trotting towards them with boys upon their backs, who called to other boys in country gigs and carts, driven by farmers. All these boys were in great spirits, and shouted to each other, until the broad fields were so full of merry music, that the crisp air laughed to hear it.

"These are but shadows of the things that have been," said the Ghost. "They have no consciousness of us."

The jocund travellers came on; and as they came, Scrooge knew and named them every one. Why was he rejoiced beyond all bounds to see them! Why did his cold eye glisten, and his heart leap up as they went past! Why was he filled with gladness when he heard them give each other Merry Christmas, as they parted at cross-roads and byeways, for their several homes! What was merry Christmas to Scrooge? Out upon merry Christmas! What good had it ever done to him?

"The school is not quite deserted," said the Ghost. "A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still."

Scrooge said he knew it. And he sobbed.

They left the high-road, by a well-remembered lane, and soon approached a mansion of dull red brick, with a little weathercock-surmounted cupola, on the roof, and a bell hanging in it. It was a large house, but one of broken fortunes; for the spacious offices were little used, their walls were damp and mossy, their windows broken, and their gates decayed. Fowls clucked and strutted in the stables; and the coach-houses and sheds were overrun with grass. Nor was it more retentive of its ancient state, within; for entering the dreary hall, and glancing through the open doors of many rooms, they found them poorly furnished, cold, and vast. There was an earthy savour in the air, a chilly bareness in the place, which associated itself somehow with too much getting up by candle-light, and not too much to eat.

They went, the Ghost and Scrooge, across the hall, to a door at the back of the house. It opened before them, and disclosed a long, bare, melancholy room, made barer still by lines of plain deal forms and desks. At one of these a lonely boy was reading near a feeble fire; and Scrooge sat down upon a form, and wept to see his poor forgotten self as he had used to be.

Not a latent echo in the house, not a squeak and scuffle from the mice behind the panelling, not a drip from the half-thawed water-spout in the dull yard behind, not a sigh among the leafless boughs of one despondent poplar, not the idle swinging of an empty store-house door, no, not a clicking in the fire, but fell upon the heart of Scrooge with softening influence, and gave a freer passage to his tears.

The spirit touched him on the arm, and pointed to his younger self, intent upon his reading. Suddenly a man in foreign garments: wonderfully real and distinct to look at: stood outside the window, with an axe stuck in his belt, and leading an ass laden with wood by the bridle.

"Why, it's Ali Baba!"[10] Scrooge exclaimed in ecstasy. "It's dear old honest Ali Baba! Yes, yes, I know! One Christmas time, when yonder solitary child was left here all alone, he *did* come, for the first time, just like that. Poor boy! And Valentine," said Scrooge, "and his wild brother, Orson; there they go! And what's his name, who was put down in his drawers, asleep, at the Gate of Damascus; don't you see him! And the Sultan's Groom turned upside down by the Genii; there he is upon his head! Serve him right. I'm glad of it. What business had *he* to be married to the Princess!"

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[10] Scrooge sees and recognizes the heroes of the books which had been almost his only comforters in his neglected childhood.

To hear Scrooge expending all the earnestness of his nature on such subjects, in a most extraordinary voice between laughing and crying; and to see his heightened and excited face; would have been a surprise to his business friends in the City, indeed.

"There's the Parrot!" cried Scrooge. "Green body and yellow tail, with a thing like a lettuce growing out of the top of his head; there he is! Poor Robin Crusoe, he called him, when he came home again after sailing round the island. 'Poor Robin Crusoe, where have you been, Robin Crusoe?' The man thought he was dreaming, but he wasn't. It was the Parrot, you know. There goes Friday, running for his life to the little creek! Halloa! Hoop! Halloo!"

Then, with a rapidity of transition very foreign to his usual character, he said, in pity for his former self, "Poor boy!" and cried again.

"I wish," Scrooge muttered, putting his hand in his pocket, and looking about him, after drying his eyes with his cuff: "but it's too late now."

"What is the matter?" asked the Spirit.

"Nothing," said Scrooge. "Nothing. There was a boy singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all."

The Ghost smiled thoughtfully, and waved its hand: saying as it did so, "Let us see another Christmas!"

Scrooge's former self grew larger at the words, and the room became a little darker and more dirty. The panels shrank, the windows cracked; fragments of plaster fell out of the ceiling, and the naked laths were shown instead; but how all this was brought about, Scrooge knew no more than you do. He only knew that it was quite correct; that everything had happened so; that there he was, alone again, when all the other boys had gone home for the jolly holidays.

He was not reading now, but walking up and down despairingly. Scrooge looked at the Ghost, and with a mournful shaking of his head, glanced anxiously towards the door.

It opened; and a little girl, much younger than the boy, came darting in, and putting her arms about his neck, and often kissing him, addressed him as her "Dear, dear brother."

"I have come to bring you home, dear brother!" said the child, clapping her tiny hands, and bending down to laugh. "To bring you home, home, home!"

"Home, little Fan?" returned the boy.

"Yes!" said the child, brimful of glee. "Home, for good and all. Home, for ever and ever. Father is so much kinder than he used to be, that home's like Heaven! He spoke so gently to me one dear night when I was going to bed, that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said Yes, you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you. And you're to be a man!" said the child, opening her eyes, "and are never to come back here; but first, we're to be together all the Christmas long, and have the merriest time in all the world."

"You are quite a woman, little Fan!" exclaimed the boy.

She clapped her hands and laughed, and tried to touch his head; but being too little, laughed again, and stood on tiptoe to embrace him. Then she began to drag him, in her childish eagerness, towards the door; and he, nothing loth to go, accompanied her.

A terrible voice in the hall cried, "Bring down Master Scrooge's box, there!" and in the hall appeared the schoolmaster himself, who glared on Master Scrooge with a ferocious condescension, and threw him into a dreadful state of mind by shaking hands with him. He then conveyed him and his sister into the veriest old well of a shivering best-parlor that ever was seen, where the maps upon the wall, and the celestial and terrestrial globes in the windows, were waxy with cold. Here he produced a decanter of curiously light wine, and a block of curiously heavy cake, and administered instalments of those dainties to the young people: at the same time, sending out a meagre servant to offer a glass of "something" to the postboy, who answered that he thanked the gentleman, but if it was the same tap as he had tasted before, he had rather not. Master Scrooge's trunk being by this time tied on to the top of the chaise, the children bade the schoolmaster good-bye right willingly; and getting into it, drove gaily down the garden-sweep: the quick wheels dashing the hoar-frost and snow from off the dark leaves of the evergreens like spray.

"Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered," said the Ghost. "But she had a large heart!"

"So she had," cried Scrooge. "You're right. I'll not gainsay it, Spirit. God forbid!"

"She died a woman," said the Ghost, "and had, as I think, children."

IN THE BEST PARLOR

"One child," Scrooge returned.

"True," said the Ghost. "Your nephew!"

Scrooge seemed uneasy in his mind; and answered briefly, "Yes."

Although they had but that moment left the school behind them, they were now in the busy thoroughfares of a city, where shadowy passengers passed and repassed; where shadowy carts and coaches battled for the way, and all the strife and tumult of a real city were. It was made plain enough, by the dressing of the shops, that here, too, it was Christmas time again; but it was evening, and the streets were lighted up.

The Ghost stopped at a certain warehouse door, and asked Scrooge if he knew it.

"Know it!" said Scrooge. "Was I apprenticed here?"

They went in. At sight of an old gentleman in a Welsh wig, sitting behind such a high desk, that if he had been two inches taller he must have knocked his head against the ceiling, Scrooge cried in great excitement:

"Why, it's old Fezziwig! Bless his heart; it's Fezziwig alive again!"

Old Fezziwig laid down his pen, and looked up at the clock, which pointed to the hour of seven. He rubbed his hands; adjusted his capacious waistcoat; laughed all over himself, from his shoes to his organ of benevolence; and called out in a comfortable, oily, rich, fat, jovial voice:

"Yo ho, there! Ebenezer! Dick!"

Scrooge's former self, now grown a young man, came briskly in, accompanied by his fellow-'prentice.

"Dick Wilkins, to be sure!" said Scrooge to the Ghost. "Bless me, yes. There he is. He was very much attached to me, was Dick. Poor Dick! Dear, dear!"

"You ho, my boys!" said Fezziwig. "No more work to-night. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let's have the shutters up," cried old

Fezziwig, with a sharp clap of his hands, "before a man can say Jack Robinson!"

You wouldn't believe how those two fellows went at it! They charged into the street with the shutters—one, two, three—had 'em up in their places—four, five, six—barred 'em and pinned 'em—seven, eight, nine—and came back before you could have got to twelve, panting like race horses.

"Hilli-ho!" cried old Fezziwig, skipping down from the high desk, with wonderful agility. "Clear away, my lads, and let's have lots of room here! Hilli-ho, Dick; Chirrup, Ebenezer!"

Clear away! There was nothing they wouldn't have cleared away, or couldn't have cleared away, with old Fezziwig looking on. It was done in a minute. Every movable was packed off, as if it were dismissed from public life for ever more; the floor was swept and watered, the lamps were trimmed, fuel was heaped upon the fire, and the warehouse was as snug, and warm, and dry, and bright a ball-room, as you would desire to see upon a winter's night.

In came a fiddler with a music-book, and went up to the lofty desk, and made an orchestra of it, and tuned like fifty stomach-aches. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. In came the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and lovable. In came the six young followers whose hearts they broke. In came all the young men and women employed in the business. In came the housemaid, with her cousin, the baker. In came the cook, with her brother's particular friend, the milkman. In came the boy from over the way, who was suspected of not having board enough from his master; trying to hide himself behind the girl from next door but one, who was proved to have had her ears pulled by her mistress. In they all came, one after another; some shyly, some boldly, some gracefully, some awkwardly, some pushing, some pulling; in they all came, anyhow and everyhow. Away they all went, twenty couple at once, hands half round and back again the other way; down the middle and up again, round and round in various stages of affectionate grouping; old top couple always turning up in the wrong place; new top couple starting off again as soon as they got there; all top couples at last, and not a bottom one to help them. When this result was brought about, old Fezziwig, clapping his hands to stop the dance, cried out, "Well done!" and the fiddler plunged his hot face into a pot of porter, especially provided for that purpose. But scorning rest upon his reappearance, he instantly began again, though there were no dancers yet, as if the other fiddler had been carried home, exhausted, on a shutter; and he were a bran-new man resolved to beat him out of sight, or perish.

There were more dances, and there were forfeits, and more dances, and there was cake, and there was negus, and there was a great piece of Cold Roast, and there was a great piece of Cold Boiled, and there were mince-pies, and plenty of beer. But the great effect of the evening came after the Roast and Boiled, when the fiddler (an artful, dog, mind! The sort of man who knew his business better than you or I could have told it him!) struck up "Sir Roger de Coverley."[11] Then old Fezziwig stood out to dance with Mrs. Fezziwig. Top couple, too; with a good stiff piece of work cut out for them; three or four and twenty pair of partners; people who were not to be trifled with; people who *would* dance, and had no notion of walking.

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[11] "Sir Roger de Coverley" is the English name for the old-fashioned country-dance which is called in the United States the "Virginia Reel."

THE FIDDLER STRUCK UP "SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY"

But if they had been twice as many: ah, four times: old Fezziwig would have been a match for them, and so would Mrs. Fezziwig. As to *her,* she was worthy to be his partner in every sense of the term. If that's not high praise, tell me higher, and

I'll use it. A positive light appeared to issue from Fezziwig's calves. They shone in every part of the dance like moons. You couldn't have predicted, at any given time, what would become of 'em next. And when old Fezziwig and Mrs. Fezziwig had gone all through the dance; advance and retire, hold hands with your partner; bow and curtsey; corkscrew; thread-the-needle, and back again to your place; Fezziwig "cut"—cut so deftly, that he appeared to wink with his legs, and came upon his feet again without a stagger.

When the clock struck eleven, this domestic ball broke up. Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig took their stations, one on either side the door, and shaking hands with every person individually as he or she went out, wished him or her a Merry Christmas.

When everybody had retired but the two 'prentices, they did the same to them; and thus the cheerful voices died away, and the lads were left to their beds; which were under a counter in the back-shop.

During the whole of this time, Scrooge had acted like a man out of his wits. His heart and soul were in the scene, and with his former self. He corroborated everything, remembered everything, enjoyed everything, and underwent the strangest agitation. It was not until now, when the bright faces of his former self and Dick were turned from them, that he remembered the Ghost, and became conscious that it was looking full upon him, while the light upon its head burnt very clear.

"A small matter," said the Ghost, "to make these silly folks so full of gratitude."

"Small!" echoed Scrooge.

The spirit signed to him to listen to the two apprentices, who were pouring out their hearts in praise of Fezziwig: and when he had done so, said,

"Why! Is it not? He has spent but a few pounds of your mortal money: three or four, perhaps. Is that so much that he deserves this praise?"

"It isn't that," said Scrooge, heated by the remark, and speaking unconsciously like his former, not his latter, self. "It isn't that, Spirit. He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. Say that his power lies in words and looks; in things so slight and insignificant that it is impossible to add and count 'em up: what then? The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune."

He felt the Spirit's glance, and stopped.

"What is the matter?" asked the Ghost.

"Nothing particular," said Scrooge.

"Something, I think?" the Ghost insisted.

"No," said Scrooge. "No. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now! That's all."

His former self turned down the lamps as he gave utterance to the wish; and Scrooge and the Ghost again stood side by side in the open air.

"My time grows short," observed the Spirit. "Quick!"

This was not addressed to Scrooge, or to any one whom he could see, but it produced an immediate effect. For again Scrooge saw himself. He was older now; a man in the prime of life. His face had not the harsh and rigid lines of later years; but it had begun to wear the signs of care and avarice.

There was an eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye, which showed the passion that had taken root, and where the shadow of the growing tree would fall. He was not alone, but sat by the side of a fair young girl in a mourning dress; in whose eyes there were tears, which sparkled in the light that shone out of the Ghost of Christmas Past.

"It matters little," she said, softly. "To you, very little. Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve."

"What idol has displaced you?" he rejoined.

"A golden one."

"This is the even-handed dealing of the world!" he said. "There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty; and there is nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!"

"You fear the world too much," she answered, gently. "All your other hopes have merged into the hope of being beyond the chance of its sordid reproach. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you. Have I not?"

"What then?" he retorted. "Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you."

She shook her head.

"Am I?"

"Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so, until, in good season, we could improve our worldly fortune by our patient industry. You *are* changed. When it was made, you were another man."

"I was a boy," he said impatiently.

"Your own feeling tells you that you were not what you are," she returned. "I am. That which promised happiness when we were one in heart, is fraught with misery now that we are two. How often and how keenly I have thought of this, I will not say. It is enough that I *have* thought of it, and can release you."

"Have I ever sought release?"

"In words, no. Never."

"In what, then?"

"In a changed nature; in an altered spirit; in another atmosphere of life; another Hope as its great end. In everything that made my love of any worth or value in your sight. If this had never been between us," said the girl, looking mildly, but with steadiness, upon him; "tell me, would you seek me out and try to win me now? Ah, no!"

He seemed to yield to the justice of this supposition, in spite of himself. But he said with a struggle, "You think not."

"I would gladly think otherwise if I could," she answered, "Heaven knows! When *I* have learned a Truth like this, I know how strong and irresistible it must be.

"But if you were free to-day, to-morrow, yesterday, can even I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl—you who, in your very confidence with her, weigh everything by Gain: or, choosing her, if for a moment you were false enough to your one guiding principle to do so, do I not know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do; and I release you. With a full heart, for the love of him you once were."

He was about to speak; but with her head turned from him, she resumed.

"You may—the memory of what is past half makes me hope you will—have pain in this. A very, very brief time, and you will dismiss the recollection of it, gladly, as an unprofitable dream, from which it happened well that you awoke. May you be happy in the life you have chosen!"

She left him, and they parted.

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, "show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?"

"One shadow more!" exclaimed the Ghost.

"No more!" cried Scrooge. "No more. I don't wish to see it. Show me no more!"

But the relentless Ghost pinioned him in both his arms, and forced him to observe what happened next.

They were in another scene and place; a room, not very large or handsome, but full of comfort. Near to the winter fire sat a beautiful young girl, so like the last that Scrooge believed it was the same, until he saw *her,* now a comely matron, sitting opposite her daughter. The noise in this room was perfectly tumultuous, for there were more children there than Scrooge in his agitated state of mind could count; and, unlike the celebrated herd in the poem, they were not forty children conducting themselves like one, but every child was conducting itself like forty. The consequences were uproarious beyond belief; but no one seemed to care; on the contrary, the mother and daughter laughed heartily, and enjoyed it very much; and the latter, soon beginning to mingle in the sports, got pillaged by the young brigands most ruthlessly. What would I not have given to be one of them! Though I never could have been so rude, no, no! I wouldn't for the wealth of all the world have crushed that braided hair, and torn it down; and for the precious little shoe, I wouldn't have plucked it off, God bless my soul! to save my life. As to measuring her waist in sport, as they did, bold young brood; I couldn't have done it; I should have expected my arm to have grown round it for a punishment, and never come straight again. And yet I should have dearly liked, I own, to have touched her lips; to have questioned her, that she might have opened them; to have looked upon the lashes of her downcast eyes, and never raised a blush; to have let loose waves of hair, an inch of which would be a keepsake beyond price: in short, I should have liked, I do confess, to have had the lightest license of a child, and yet been man enough to know its value.

But now a knocking at the door was heard, and such a rush immediately ensued that she with laughing face and plundered dress was borne towards it the centre of a flushed and boisterous group, just in time to greet the father, who came home attended by a man laden with Christmas toys and presents. Then the shouting and the struggling, and the onslaught that was made on the defenceless porter! The scaling him with chairs for ladders to dive into his pockets, despoil him of brown-paper parcels, hold on tight by his cravat, hug him around the neck, pommel his back, and kick his legs in irrepressible affection! The shouts of wonder and delight with which the development of every package was received! The terrible announcement that the baby had been taken in the act of putting a doll's frying-pan into his mouth, and was more than suspected of having swallowed a fictitious turkey, glued on a wooden platter! The immense relief of finding this a false alarm! The joy, and gratitude, and ecstasy! They are all indescribable alike. It is enough that by degrees the children and their emotions got out of the parlour, and by one stair at a time, up to the top of the house; where they went to bed, and so subsided.

And now Scrooge looked on more attentively than ever, when the master of the house, having his daughter leaning fondly on him, sat down, with her and her mother at his own fireside; and when he thought that such another creature, quite as graceful and as full of promise, might have called him father, and been a spring-time in the haggard winter of his life, his sight grew very dim indeed.

"Belle," said the husband, turning to his wife with a smile, "I saw an old friend of yours this afternoon."

"Who was it?"

"Guess!"

"How can I? Tut, don't I know?" she added in the same breath, laughing as he laughed. "Mr. Scrooge."

"Mr. Scrooge it was. I passed his office window; and as it was not shut up, and he had a candle inside, I could scarcely help seeing him. His partner lies upon the point of death, I hear; and there he sat alone. Quite alone in the world, I do believe."

"Spirit!" said Scrooge in a broken voice, "remove me from this place."

"I told you these were shadows of the things that have been," said the Ghost. "That they are what they are, do not blame me!"

"Remove me!" Scrooge exclaimed, "I cannot bear it!"

He turned upon the Ghost, and seeing that it looked upon him with a face in which in some strange way there were fragments of all the faces it had shown him, wrestled with it.

"Leave me! Take me back. Haunt me no longer!"

In the struggle, if that can be called a struggle in which the Ghost with no visible resistance on its own part was undisturbed by any effort of its adversary, Scrooge observed that its light was burning high and bright; and dimly connecting that with its influence over him, he seized the extinguisher-cap, and by a sudden action pressed it down upon its head.

The Spirit dropped beneath it, so that the extinguisher covered its whole form; but though Scrooge pressed it down with all his force, he could not hide the light, which streamed from under it, in an unbroken flood upon the ground.

He was conscious of being exhausted, and overcome by an irresistible drowsiness; and further, of being in his own bedroom. He gave the cap a parting squeeze, in which his hand relaxed; and had barely time to reel to bed, before he sank into a heavy sleep.

STAVE THREE

The Second of the Three Spirits

AWAKING in the middle of a prodigiously tough snore, and sitting up in bed to get his thoughts together, Scrooge had no occasion to be told that the bell was again upon the stroke of One. He felt that he was restored to consciousness in the right nick of time, for the especial purpose of holding a conference with the second messenger despatched to him through Jacob Marley's intervention. But, finding that he turned uncomfortably cold when he began to wonder which of his curtains this new spectre would draw back, he put them every one aside with his own hands, and lying down again, established a sharp lookout all round the bed. For he wished to challenge the Spirit on the moment of its appearance, and did not wish to be taken by surprise and made nervous.

Gentlemen of the free-and-easy sort, who plume themselves on being acquainted with a move or two, and being usually equal to the time-of-day, express the wide range of their capacity for adventure by observing that they are good for anything from pitch-and-toss to manslaughter; between which opposite extremes, no doubt, there lies a tolerably wide and comprehensive range of subjects. Without venturing for Scrooge quite as hardily as this, I don't mind calling on you to believe that he was ready for a good broad field of strange appearances, and that nothing between a baby and rhinoceros would have astonished him very much.

Now, being prepared for almost anything, he was not by any means prepared for nothing; and, consequently, when the bell struck One, and no shape appeared, he was taken with a violent fit of trembling. Five minutes, ten minutes, a quarter of an hour went by, yet nothing came. All this time, he lay upon his bed, the very core and centre of a blaze of ruddy light, which streamed upon it when the clock proclaimed the hour; and which, being only light, was more alarming than a dozen ghosts, as he was powerless to make out what it meant, or would be at; and was sometimes apprehensive that he might be at that very moment an interesting case of spontaneous combustion, without having the consolation of knowing it. At last, however, he began to think —as you or I would have thought at first; for it is always the person not in the predicament who knows what ought to have been done in it, and would unquestionably have done it too—at last, I say, he began to think that the source and secret of this ghostly light might be in the adjoining room, from whence, on further tracing it, it seemed to shine. This idea taking full possession of his mind, he got up softly and shuffled in his slippers to the door.

The moment Scrooge's hand was on the lock, a strange voice called him by his name, and bade him enter. He obeyed.

It was his own room. There was no doubt about that. But it had undergone a surprising transformation. The walls and ceiling were so hung with living green, that it looked a perfect grove, from every part of which, bright gleaming berries glistened. The crisp leaves of holly, mistletoe, and ivy reflected back the light, as if so many little mirrors had been scattered there; and such a mighty blaze went roaring up the chimney, as that dull petrifaction of a hearth had never known in Scrooge's time, or Marley's, or for many and many a winter season gone. Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince-pies, plum-puddings, barrels of oysters, red hot chestnuts, cherry-cheeked apples, juicy oranges, luscious pears, immense twelfth-cakes, and seething bowls of punch, that made the chamber dim with their delicious steam. In easy state upon this couch there sat a jolly Giant, glorious to see; who bore a glowing torch, in shape not unlike Plenty's horn, and held it up, high up, to shed its light on Scrooge, as he came peeping round the door.

"Come in!" exclaimed the Ghost. "Come in! and know me better, man!"

Scrooge entered timidly, and hung his head before this Spirit. He was not the dogged Scrooge he had been; and though the Spirit's eyes were clear and kind, he did not like to meet them.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Present," said the Spirit. "Look upon me!"

Scrooge reverently did so. It was clothed in one simple deep green robe, or mantle, bordered with white fur. This garment hung so loosely on the figure, that its capacious breast was bare, as if disdaining to be warded or concealed by any artifice. Its feet, observable beneath the ample folds of the garment, were also bare; and on its head it wore no other covering than a holly wreath set here and there with shining icicles. Its dark brown curls were long and free; free as its genial face, its sparkling eye, its open hand, its cheery voice, its unconstrained demeanour, and its joyful air. Girded round its middle was an antique scabbard; but no sword was in it, and the ancient sheath was eaten up with rust.

UPON THIS COUCH THERE SAT A JOLLY GIANT

"You have never seen the like of me before!" exclaimed the Spirit.

"Never," Scrooge made answer to it.

"Have never walked forth with the younger members of my family; meaning (for I am very young) my elder brothers born in these later years?" pursued the Phantom.

"I don't think I have," said Scrooge. "I am afraid I have not. Have you had many brothers, Spirit?"

"More than eighteen hundred," said the Ghost.

"A tremendous family to provide for!" muttered Scrooge.

The Ghost of Christmas Present rose.

"Spirit," said Scrooge submissively, "conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learnt a lesson which is working now. To-night, if you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it."

"Touch my robe!"

Scrooge did as he was told, and held it fast.

Holly, mistletoe, red berries, ivy, turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, meat, pigs, sausages, oysters, pies, puddings, fruit, and punch, all vanished instantly. So did the room, the fire, the ruddy glow, the hour of night, and they stood in the city streets on Christmas morning, where (for the weather was severe) the people made a rough, but brisk and not unpleasant kind of music, in scraping the snow from the pavement in front of their dwellings, and from the tops of their houses: whence it was mad delight to the boys to see it come plumping down into the road below, and splitting into artificial little snowstorms.

The house fronts looked black enough, and the windows blacker, contrasting with the smooth white sheet of snow upon the roofs, and with the dirtier snow upon the ground; which last deposit had been ploughed up in deep furrows by the heavy wheels of carts and waggons; furrows that crossed and recrossed each other hundreds of times where the great streets branched off, and made intricate channels, hard to trace, in the thick yellow mud and icy water. The sky was gloomy, and the shortest streets were choked up with a dingy mist, half thawed, half frozen, whose heavier particles descended in a shower of sooty atoms, as if all the chimneys in Great Britain had, by one consent, caught fire, and were blazing away to their dear hearts' content. There was nothing very cheerful in the climate or the town, and yet there was an air of cheerfulness abroad that the clearest summer air and brightest summer sun might have endeavoured to diffuse in vain.

For, the people who were shovelling away on the housetops were jovial and full of glee; calling out to one another from the parapets, and now and then exchanging a facetious snowball—better-natured missile far than many a wordy jest—laughing heartily if it went right and not less heartily if it went wrong. The poulterers' shops were still half open, and the fruiterers' were radiant in their glory. There were great, round pot-bellied baskets of chestnuts, shaped like the waistcoats of jolly old gentlemen, lolling at the doors, and tumbling out into the street in their apoplectic opulence. There were ruddy, brown-faced broad-girthed Spanish onions, shining in the fatness of their growth like Spanish Friars; and winking from their shelves in wanton slyness at the girls as they went by, and glanced demurely at the hung-up mistletoe. There were pears and apples, clustered high in blooming pyramids; there were bunches of grapes, made, in the shopkeepers' benevolence, to dangle from conspicuous hooks, that people's mouths might water gratis as they passed; there were piles of filberts, mossy and brown, recalling, in their fragrance, ancient walks among the woods, and pleasant shufflings ankle deep through withered leaves; there were Norfolk Biffins,[12] squab and swarthy, setting off the yellow of the oranges and lemons, and, in the great compactness of their juicy persons, urgently entreating and beseeching to be carried home in paper bags and eaten after dinner. The very gold and silver fish, set forth among these choice fruits in a bowl, though members of a dull and stagnant-blooded race, appeared to know that there was something going on; and, to a fish, went gasping round and round their little world in slow and passionless excitement.

The Grocers'! oh the Grocers'! nearly closed, with perhaps two shutters down, or one; but through those gaps such glimpses! It was not alone that the scales descending on the counter made a merry sound, or that the twine and roller parted company so briskly, or that the canisters were rattled up and down like juggling tricks, or even that the blended scents of tea and coffee were so grateful to the nose, or even that the raisins were so plentiful and rare, the almonds so extremely white, the sticks of cinnamon so long and straight, the other spices so delicious, the candied fruits so caked and spotted with molten sugar as to make the coldest lookers-on feel faint and subsequently bilious. Nor was it that the figs were moist and pulpy, or that the French plums blushed in modest tartness from their highly-decorated boxes, or that everything was good to eat and in its Christmas dress: but the customers were all so hurried and so eager in the hopeful promise of the day, that they tumbled up against each other at the door, clashing their wicker baskets wildly, and left their purchases upon the counter, and came running back to fetch them, and committed hundreds of the like mistakes in the best humour possible; while the Grocer and his people were so frank and fresh that the polished hearts with which they fastened their aprons behind might have been their own, worn outside for general inspection, and for Christmas daws to peck at if they chose.

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[12] Biffins are an excellent variety of apples raised in England.

But soon the steeples called good people all, to church and chapel, and away they came, flocking through the streets in their best clothes, and with their gayest faces. And at the same time there emerged from scores of by-streets, lanes, and nameless turnings, innumerable people carrying their dinner to the bakers' shops. The sight of these poor revellers appeared to interest the Spirit very much, for he stood with Scrooge beside him in a baker's[13] doorway, and taking off the covers as their bearers passed, sprinkled incense on their dinners from his torch. And it was a very uncommon kind of torch, for once or twice when there were angry words between some dinner-carriers who had jostled with each other, he shed a few drops of water on them from it, and their good humour was restored directly. For they said, it was a shame to quarrel upon Christmas Day. And so it was! God love it, so it was!

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[13] *Baker's* here does not mean exactly what it means with us. In England the poorer people often take their dinners to a baker's to be cooked.

In time the bells ceased, and the bakers were shut up; and yet there was a genial shadowing forth of all these dinners and the progress of their cooking, in the thawed blotch of wet above each baker's oven; where the pavement smoked as if its stones were cooking too.

"Is there a peculiar flavour in what you sprinkle from your torch?" asked Scrooge.

"There is. My own."

"Would it apply to any kind of dinner on this day?" asked Scrooge.

"To any kindly given. To a poor one most."

"Why to a poor one most?" asked Scrooge.

"Because it needs it most."

"Spirit," said Scrooge, after a moment's thought, "I wonder you, of all the beings in the many worlds about us, should desire to cramp these people's opportunities of innocent enjoyment."

"I!" cried the Spirit.

"You would deprive them of their means of dining every seventh day, often the only day on which they can be said to dine at all," said Scrooge. "Wouldn't you?"

"I!" cried the Spirit.

"You seek to close these places on the seventh day?" said Scrooge. "And it comes to the same thing."

"I seek!" exclaimed the Spirit.

"Forgive me if I am wrong. It has been done in your name, or at least in that of your family," said Scrooge.

"There are some upon this earth of yours," returned the Spirit, "who lay claim to know us, and who do their deeds of passion, pride, ill-will, hatred, envy, bigotry, and selfishness in our name, who are as strange to us and all our kith and kin, as if they had never lived. Remember that, and charge their doings on themselves, not us."

Scrooge promised that he would; and they went on, invisible, as they had been before, into the suburbs of the town. It was a remarkable quality of the Ghost (which Scrooge had observed at the baker's), that notwithstanding his gigantic size, he could accommodate himself to any place with ease; and that he stood beneath a low roof quite as gracefully and like a supernatural creature, as it was possible he could have done in any lofty hall.

And perhaps it was the pleasure the good Spirit had in showing off this power of his, or else it was his own kind, generous, hearty nature, and his sympathy with all poor men, that led him straight to Scrooge's clerk's; for there he went, and took Scrooge with him, holding to his robe; and on the threshold of the door the Spirit smiled, and stopped to bless Bob Cratchit's dwelling with the sprinklings of his torch. Think of that! Bob had but fifteen "bob"[14] a week himself; he pocketed on Saturdays but fifteen copies of his Christian name; and yet the Ghost of Christmas Present blessed his four-roomed house!

Then up rose Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence; and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and

[14] A *bob*, in English slang, is a shilling.

getting the corners of his monstrous shirt collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honour of the day) into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable Parks. And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelt the goose, and known it for their own; and basking in luxurious thoughts of sage-and-onion, these young Cratchits danced about the table, and exalted Master Peter Cratchit to the skies, while he (not proud, although his collars nearly choked him) blew the fire, until the slow potatoes bubbling up, knocked loudly at the saucepan-lid to be let out and peeled.

"What has ever got your precious father then?" said Mrs. Cratchit. "And your brother, Tiny Tim! And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half-an-hour!"

"Here's Martha, mother!" said a girl, appearing as she spoke.

"Here's Martha, mother!" cried the two young Cratchits. "Hurrah! There's *such* a goose, Martha!"

"Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!" said Mrs. Cratchit, kissing her a dozen times, and taking off her shawl and bonnet for her with officious zeal.

"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night," replied the girl, "and had to clear away this morning, mother!"

"Well! Never mind so long as you are come," said Mrs. Cratchit. "Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye!"

Bob and Tiny Tim

"No, no! There's father coming," cried the two young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once. "Hide, Martha, hide!"

So Martha hid herself, and in came little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter exclusive of the fringe, hanging down before him; and his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!

"Why, where's our Martha?" cried Bob Cratchit, looking round.

"Not coming," said Mrs. Cratchit.

"Not coming!" said Bob, with a sudden declension in his high spirits; for he had been Tim's blood horse all the way from church, and had come home rampant. "Not coming upon Christmas Day!"

Martha didn't like to see him disappointed, if it were only in joke; so she came out prematurely from behind the closet door, and ran into his arms, while the two young Cratchits hustled Tiny Tim, and bore him off into the wash-house, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

"And how did little Tim behave?" asked Mrs. Cratchit, when she had rallied Bob on his credulity, and Bob had hugged his daughter to his heart's content.

"As good as gold," said Bob, "and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see."

Bob's voice was tremulous when he told them this, and trembled more when he said that Tiny Tim was growing strong and hearty.

His active little crutch was heard upon the floor, and back came Tiny Tim before another word was spoken, escorted by his brother and sister to his stool before the fire; and while Bob, turning up his cuffs —as if, poor fellow, they were capable of being made more shabby—compounded some hot mixture in a jug with gin and lemons, and stirred it round and round and put it on the hob to simmer; Master Peter, and the two ubiquitous young Cratchits went to fetch the goose, with which they soon returned in high procession.

Such a bustle ensued that you might have thought a goose the rarest of all birds; a feathered phenomenon, to which a black swan was a matter of course —and in truth it was something very like it in that house. Mrs. Cratchit made the gravy (ready beforehand in a little saucepan) hissing hot; Master Peter mashed the potatoes with incredible vigour; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce; Martha dusted the hot plates; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves, and mounting guard upon their posts, crammed spoons into their mouths, lest they should shriek for goose before their turn came to be helped. At last the dishes were set on, and grace was said. It was succeeded by a breathless pause, as Mrs. Cratchit, looking slowly all along the carving-knife, prepared to plunge it in the breast; but when she did, and when the long expected gush of stuffing issued forth, one murmur of delight arose all round the board, and even Tiny Tim, excited by the two young Cratchits, beat on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cried "Hurrah!"

There never was such a goose. Bob said he didn't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavour, size and cheapness, were the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by the apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family; indeed, as Mrs. Cratchit said with great delight (surveying one small atom

THERE NEVER WAS SUCH A GOOSE

of a bone upon the dish) they hadn't ate it all at last! Yet everyone had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits in particular, were steeped in sage and onion to the eyebrows! But now, the plates being changed by Miss Belinda, Mrs. Cratchit left the room alone—too nervous to bear witnesses—to take the pudding up and bring it in.

Suppose it should not be done enough! Suppose it should break in turning out! Suppose somebody should have got over the wall of the back-yard, and stolen it, while they were merry with the goose—a supposition at which the two young Cratchits became livid! All sorts of horrors were supposed.

Hallo! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like a washing-day! That was the cloth. A smell like an eating-house and a pastrycook's next door to each other, with a laundress's next door to that! That was the pudding! In half a minute Mrs. Cratchit entered—flushed, but smiling proudly—with the pudding like a speckled cannon-ball so hard and firm blazing in half of half-a-quartern of ignited brandy, and bedight with Chrismas holly stuck into the top.

Oh, a wonderful pudding! Bob Cratchit said, and calmly too, that he regarded it as the greatest success achieved by Mrs. Cratchit since their marriage. Mrs. Cratchit said that now the weight was off her mind, she would confess she had had her doubts about the quantity of flour. Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody said or thought it was at all a small pudding for a large family. It would have been flat heresy to do so. Any Cratchit would have blushed to hint at such a thing.

At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up. The compound in the jug being tasted, and considered perfect, apples and oranges were put upon the table, and a shovel-full of chestnuts on the fire. Then all the Cratchit family drew round the hearth, in what Bob Cratchit called a circle, meaning half a one; and at Bob Cratchit's elbow stood the family display of glass. Two tumblers, and a custard-cup without a handle.

These held the hot stuff from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done; and Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed:

"A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!" Which all the family re-echoed.

"God bless us every one!" said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."

"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, "in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die."

"No, no," said Scrooge. "Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared."

"If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here. What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."

Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.

"Man," said the Ghost, "if man you be in heart, not adamant, forbear that wicked cant until you have discovered What the surplus is, and Where it is. Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die? It may be, that in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh God! to hear the insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!"

Scrooge bent before the Ghost's rebuke, and trembling cast his eyes upon the ground. But he raised them speedily, on hearing his own name.

"Mr. Scrooge!" said Bob; "I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"

"The Founder of the Feast indeed!" cried Mrs. Cratchit, reddening. "I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it."

"My dear," said Bob, "the children! Christmas Day."

"It should be Christmas Day, I am sure," said she, "on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert! Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow!"

"My dear," was Bob's mild answer, "Christmas Day."

"I'll drink his health for your sake and the day's," said Mrs. Cratchit, "not for his. Long life to him! A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!"

The children drank the toast after her. It was the first of their proceedings which had no heartiness in it. Tiny Tim drank it last of all, but he didn't care twopence for it. Scrooge was the Ogre of the family. The mention of his name cast a dark shadow on the party, which was not dispelled for full five minutes.

After it had passed away, they were ten times merrier than before, from the mere relief of Scrooge the Baleful being done with. Bob Cratchit told them how he had a situation in his eye for Master Peter, which would bring in, if obtained, full five-and-six-pence[15] weekly. The two young Cratchits laughed tremendously at the idea of Peter's being a man of business; and Peter himself looked thoughtfully at the fire from between his collars, as if he were deliberating what particular investments he should favour when he came into the receipt of that bewildering income. Martha, who was a poor apprentice at a milliner's, then told them what kind of work she had to do, and how many hours she worked at a stretch, and how she meant to lie abed to-morrow morning for a good long rest; to-morrow being a holiday she passed at home. Also how she had seen a countess and a lord some days before, and how the lord "was much about as tall as Peter;" at which Peter pulled up his collars so high that you couldn't have seen his head if you had been there.

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[15] *Five-and-sixpence* means five shillings and sixpence, or about $1.32.

All this time the chestnuts and the jug went round and round; and bye-and-bye they had a song, about a lost child travelling in the snow, from Tiny Tim, who had a plaintive little voice, and sang it very well indeed.

There was nothing of high mark in this. They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being waterproof; their clothes were scanty; and Peter might have known, and very likely did, the inside of a pawnbroker's. But, they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when they faded, and looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting, Scrooge had his eye upon them, and especially on Tiny Tim, until the last.

By this time it was getting dark, and snowing pretty heavily; and as Scrooge and the Spirit went along the streets, the brightness of the roaring fires in kitchens, parlours, and all sorts of rooms, was wonderful. Here, the flickering of the blaze showed preparations for a cozy dinner, with hot plates baking through and through before the fire, and deep red curtains, ready to be drawn to shut out cold and darkness. There, all the children of the house were running out into the snow to meet their married sisters, brothers, cousins, uncles, aunts, and be the first to greet them. Here, again, were shadows on the window-blind of guests assembling; and there a group of handsome girls, all hooded and fur-booted, and all chattering at once, tripped lightly off to some near neighbor's house; where, woe upon the single man who saw them enter—artful witches; well they knew it—in a glow!

But if you had judged from the numbers of people on their way to friendly gatherings, you might have thought that no one was at home to give them welcome when they got there, instead of every house expecting company, and piling up its fires half-chimney high. Blessings on it, how the Ghost exulted! How it bared its breadth of breast, and opened its capacious palm, and floated on, outpouring, with a generous hand, its bright and harmless mirth on everything within its reach! The very lamp-lighter, who ran on before dotting the dusky street with specks of light, and who was dressed to spend the evening somewhere, laughed out loudly as the Spirit passed: though little kenned the lamplighter that he had any company but Christmas!

And now, without a word of warning from the Ghost, they stood upon a bleak and desert moor, where monstrous masses of rude stone were cast about, as though it were the burial-place of giants; and water spread itself wheresoever it listed, or would have done so, but for the frost that held it prisoner; and nothing grew but moss and furze, and coarse, rank grass. Down in the west the setting sun had left a streak of fiery red, which glared upon the desolation for an instant, like a sullen eye, and frowning lower, lower, lower yet, was lost in the thick gloom of darkest night.

"What place is this?" asked Scrooge.

"A place where miners live, who labour in the bowels of the earth," returned the Spirit. "But they know me. See!"

A light shone from the window of a hut, and swiftly they advanced towards it. Passing through the wall of mud and stone, they found a cheerful company assembled round a glowing fire. An old, old man and woman, with their children and their children's children, and another generation beyond that, all decked out gaily in their holiday attire. The old man, in a voice that seldom rose above the howling of the wind upon the barren waste, was singing them a Christmas song; it had been a very old song when he was a boy; and from time to time they all joined in the chorus. So surely as they raised their voices, the old man got quite blithe and loud; and so surely as they stopped, his vigour sank again.

The Spirit did not tarry here, but bade Scrooge hold his robe, and passing on above the moor, sped whither? Not to sea? To sea. To Scrooge's horror, looking back, he saw the last of the land, a frightful range of rocks, behind them; and his ears were deafened by the thundering of water, as it rolled, and roared, and raged among the dreadful caverns it had worn, and fiercely tried to undermine the earth.

Built upon a dismal reef of sunken rocks, some leagues or so from shore, on which the waters chafed and dashed, the wild year through, there stood a solitary lighthouse. Great heaps of seaweed clung to its base, and storm-birds—born of the wind one might suppose, as sea-weed of the water—rose and fell about it, like the waves they skimmed.

But even here, two men who watched the light had made a fire, that through the loophole in the thick stone wall shed out a ray of brightness on the awful sea. Joining their horny hands over the rough table at which they sat, they wished each other Merry Christmas in their can of grog; and one of them, the elder, too, with his face all damaged and scarred with hard weather, as the figure-head of an old ship might be, struck up a sturdy song that was like a Gale in itself.

Again the Ghost sped on, above the black and heavy sea—on, on—until, being far away, as he told Scrooge, from any shore, they lighted on a ship. They stood beside the helmsman at the wheel, the lookout in the bow, the officers who had the watch; dark, ghostly figures in their several stations; but every man among them hummed a Christmas tune, or had a Christmas thought, or spoke below his breath to his companion of some bygone Christmas Day, with homeward hopes belonging to it. And every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had had a kinder word for another on that day than on any day in the year; and had shared to some extent in its festivities; and had remembered those he cared for at a distance, and had known that they delighted to remember him.

It was a great surprise to Scrooge, while listening to the moaning of the wind, and thinking what a solemn thing it was to move on through the lonely darkness over an unknown abyss, whose depths were secrets as profound as Death: it was a great surprise to Scrooge, while thus engaged to hear a hearty laugh. It was a much greater surprise to Scrooge to recognize it as his own nephew's, and to find himself in a bright, dry, gleaming room, with the Spirit standing smiling by his side, and looking at that same nephew with approving affability.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Scrooge's nephew. "Ha, ha, ha!"

If you should happen, by any unlikely chance, to know a man more blest in a laugh than Scrooge's nephew, all I can say is, I should like to know him too. Introduce him to me, and I'll cultivate his acquaintance.

It is a fair, even-handed, noble adjustment of things, that while there is infection in disease and sorrow, there is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as laughter and good-humour. When Scrooge's nephew laughed in this way: holding his sides, rolling his head, and twisting his face into the most extravagant contortions: Scrooge's niece, by marriage, laughed as heartily as he. And their assembled friends being not a bit behindhand, roared out, lustily.

"Ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

"He said that Christmas was a humbug, as I live!" cried Scrooge's nephew. "He believed it too!"

"More shame for him, Fred!" said Scrooge's niece, indignantly. Bless those women; they never do anything by halves. They are always in earnest.

She was very pretty: exceedingly pretty. With a dimpled, surprised-looking, capital face; a ripe little mouth, that seemed made to be kissed—and no doubt it was; all kinds of good little dots about her chin, that melted into one another when she laughed; and the sunniest pair of eyes you ever saw in any little creature's head. Altogether she was what you would have called provoking, you know; but satisfactory, too. Oh, perfectly satisfactory!

"He's a comical old fellow," said Scrooge's nephew, "that's the truth; and not so pleasant as he might be. However, his offences carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him."

"I'm sure he is very rich, Fred," hinted Scrooge's niece. "At least you always tell *me* so."

"What of that, my dear!" said Scrooge's nephew. "His wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it. He don't make himself comfortable with it. He hasn't the satisfaction of thinking—ha, ha, ha!—that he is ever going to benefit Us with it."

"I have no patience with him," observed Scrooge's niece.

Scrooge's niece's sister, and all the other ladies, expressed the same opinion.

"Oh, I have!" said Scrooge's nephew. "I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us. and he won't come and dine with us. What's the consequence! He don't lose much of a dinner——"

"Indeed, I think he loses a very good dinner," interrupted Scrooge's niece. Everybody else said the same, and they must be allowed to have been competent judges, because they had just had dinner; and, with the dessert upon the table, were clustered round the fire, by lamplight.

"Well! I'm very glad to hear it," said Scrooge's nephew, "because I haven't any great faith in these young housekeepers. What do *you* say, Topper?"

Topper had clearly got his eye upon one of Scrooge's niece's sisters, for he answered that a bachelor was a wretched outcast, who had no right to express an opinion on the subject. Whereat Scrooge's niece's sister—the plump one with the lace tucker: not the one with the roses—blushed.

"Do go on, Fred," said Scrooge's niece, clapping her hands. "He never finishes what he begins to say! He is such a ridiculous fellow!"

Scrooge's nephew revelled in another laugh, and as it was impossible to keep the infection off, though the plump sister tried hard to do it with aromatic vinegar, his example was unanimously followed.

"I was only going to say," said Scrooge's nephew, "that the consequence of his taking a dislike to us, and not making merry with us, is, as I think, that he loses some pleasant moments, which could do him no harm. I am sure he loses pleasanter companions than he can find in his own thoughts, either in his mouldy old office, or his dusty chambers. I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not, for I pity him. He may rail at Christmas till he dies, but he can't help thinking better of it—I defy him—if he finds me going there, in good temper, year after year, and saying, 'Uncle Scrooge, how are you?' If it only puts him in the vein to leave his poor clerk fifty pounds, *that's* something; and I think I shook him yesterday."

It was their turn to laugh now at the notion of his shaking Scrooge. But being thoroughly good-natured, and not much caring what they laughed at, so that they laughed at any rate, he encouraged them in their merriment, and passed the bottle joyously.

After tea, they had some music. For they were a musical family, and knew what they were about, when they sang a Glee or Catch, I can assure you: especially Topper, who could growl away in the bass like a good one, and never swell the large veins in his forehead, or get red in the face over it. Scrooge's niece played well upon the harp; and played among other tunes a simple little air (a mere nothing: you might learn to whistle it in two minutes), which had been familiar to the child who fetched Scrooge from the boarding-school, as he had been reminded by the Ghost of Christmas Past. When this strain of music sounded, all the things that Ghost had shown him, came upon his mind; he softened more and more; and thought that if he could have listened to it often, years ago, he might have cultivated the kindnesses of life for his own happiness with his own hands, without resorting to the sexton's spade that buried Jacob Marley.[16]

But they didn't devote the whole evening to music. After a while they played at forfeits; for it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself. Stop! There was first a game at blind-man's buff. Of course there was. And I no more believe Topper was really blind than I believe he had eyes in his boots. My opinion is, that it was a done thing between him and Scrooge's nephew: and that the Ghost of Christmas Present knew it. The way he went after that plump sister in the lace tucker, was an outrage on the credulity of human nature. Knocking down the fire-irons, tumbling over the chairs, bumping up against the piano, smothering himself among the curtains, wherever she went, there went he. He always knew where the plump sister was. He wouldn't catch anybody else. If you had fallen up against him, as some of them did, and stood there; he would have made a feint of endeavoring to seize you, which would have been an affront to your understanding; and would instantly have sidled off in the direction of the plump sister. She often cried out that it wasn't

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16. In what sense has Scrooge "resorted to the sexton's spade that buried Jacob Marley" to cultivate the kindnesses of life?

fair; and it really was not. But when at last he caught her; when, in spite of all her silken rustlings, and her rapid flutterings past him, he got her into a corner whence there was no escape; then his conduct was most execrable. For his pretending not to know her; his pretending that it was necessary to touch her head-dress, and further to assure himself of her identity by pressing a certain ring upon her finger, and a certain chain about her neck; was vile, monstrous! No doubt she told him her opinion of it, when, another blind man being in office, they were so very confidential together, behind the curtains.

Scrooge's niece was not one of the blind-man's buff party, but was made comfortable with a large chair and a footstool, in a snug corner, where the Ghost and Scrooge were close behind her. But she joined in the forfeits, and loved her love to admiration with all the letters of the alphabet.[17] Likewise at the game of How, When, and Where, she was very great, and to the secret joy of Scrooge's nephew, beat her sisters hollow: though they were sharp girls too, as Topper could have told you. There might have been twenty people there, young and old, but they all played, and so did Scrooge, for, wholly forgetting in the interest he had in what was going on, that his voice made no sound in their ears, he sometimes came out with his guess quite loud, and very often guessed quite right, too; for

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17. "I love my love" is an old game of which there are several slightly different forms. The player says "I love my love with an *A* because he's —," giving some adjective beginning with *A;* "I hate him with an *A* because he's —; I took him to — and fed him on —," all the blanks being filled with words beginning with *A*. This is carried out through the whole alphabet.

the sharpest needle, best Whitechapel, warranted not to cut in the eye, was not sharper than Scrooge: blunt as he took it in his head to be.

The Ghost was greatly pleased to find him in this mood, and looked upon him with such favor, that he begged like a boy to be allowed to stay until the guests departed. But this the Spirit said could not be done.

"Here is a new game," said Scrooge. "One half-hour, Spirit, only one!"

It is a game called Yes and No, where Scrooge's nephew had to think of something, and the rest must find out what; he only answering to their questions yes or no, as the case was. The brisk fire of questioning to which he was exposed, elicited from him that he was thinking of an animal, a live animal, rather a disagreeable animal, a savage animal, an animal that growled and grunted sometimes, and talked sometimes, and lived in London, and walked about the streets, and wasn't made a show of, and wasn't led by anybody, and didn't live in a menagerie, and was never killed in a market, and was not a horse, or an ass, or a cow, or a bull, or a tiger, or a dog, or a pig, or a cat, or a bear. At every fresh question that was put to him, this nephew burst into a fresh roar of laughter; and was so inexpressibly tickled, that he was obliged to get up off the sofa and stamp.

At last the plump sister, falling into a similar state, cried out:

"I have found it out. I know what it is, Fred! I know what it is!"

"What is it?" cried Fred.

"It's your Uncle Scro-o-o-o-oge!"

Which it certainly was. Admiration was the universal sentiment, though some objected that the reply to "Is it a bear?" ought to have been "Yes;" inasmuch as an answer in the negative was sufficient to have diverted their thoughts from Mr. Scrooge, supposing they had ever had any tendency that way.

"He has given us plenty of merriment, I am sure," said Fred, "and it would be ungrateful not to drink his health. Here is a glass of mulled wine ready to our hand at the moment; and I say, 'Uncle Scrooge!' "

"Well! Uncle Scrooge!" they cried.

"A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to the old man, whatever he is!" said Scrooge's nephew. "He wouldn't take it from me, but may he have it, nevertheless. Uncle Scrooge!"

Uncle Scrooge had imperceptibly become so gay and light of heart, that he would have pledged the unconscious company in return, and thanked them in an inaudible speech, if the Ghost had given him time. But the whole scene passed off in the breath of the last word spoken by his nephew; and he and the Spirit were again upon their travels.

Much they saw, and far they went, and many homes they visited, but always with a happy end. The Spirit stood beside sick-beds, and they were cheerful; on foreign lands, and they were close at home; by struggling men, and they were patient in their greater hope; by poverty, and it was rich. In almshouse, hospital, and jail, in misery's every refuge, where vain man in his little brief authority had not made fast the door, and barred the Spirit out, he left his blessing, and taught Scrooge his precepts.

It was a long night, if it were only a night; but Scrooge had his doubts of this, because the Christmas Holidays appeared to be condensed into the space of time they passed together. It was strange, too, that while Scrooge remained unaltered in his outward form, the Ghost grew older, clearly older. Scrooge had observed this change, but never spoke of it, until they left a children's Twelfth Night party, when, looking at the Spirit as they stood together in an open place, he noticed that his hair was gray.

"Are spirits' lives so short?" asked Scrooge.

"My life upon this globe is very brief," replied the Ghost. "It ends to-night."

"To-night!" cried Scrooge.

"To-night at midnight. Hark! The time is drawing near."

The chimes were ringing the three quarters past eleven at that moment.

"Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask," said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, "but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts! Is it a foot or a claw!"

"It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it," was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. "Look here."

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

"Oh, Man! look here. Look, look, down here!" exclaimed the Ghost.

They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

Scrooge started back, appalled. Having them shown to him in this way, he tried to say they were fine children, but the words choked themselves, rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.

"Spirit! are they yours?" Scrooge could say no more.

"They are Man's," said the Spirit, looking down upon them. "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it!" cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand towards the city. "Slander those who tell it ye! Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse! And bide the end!"

"Have they no refuge or resource?" cried Scrooge.

"Are there no prisons?" said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. "Are there no workhouses?"

The bell struck twelve.

Scrooge looked about him for the Ghost, and saw it not. As the last stroke ceased to vibrate, he remembered the prediction of old Jacob Marley, and lifting up his eyes, beheld a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded, coming, like a mist along the ground, towards him.

STAVE FOUR

The Last of the Spirits

THE Phantom slowly, gravely approached. When it came near him, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.

It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded.

He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him, and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more, for the Spirit neither spoke nor moved.

"I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come?" said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not, but pointed downward with its hand.

"You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us," Scrooge pursued. "Is that so, Spirit?"

The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head. That was the only answer he received.

Although well used to ghostly company by this time, Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him, and he found that he could hardly stand when he prepared to follow it. The Spirit paused a moment, as observing his condition, and giving him time to recover.

But Scrooge was all the worse for this. It thrilled him with a vague uncertain horror, to know that behind the dusky shroud there were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him, while he, though he stretched his own to the utmost, could see nothing but a spectral hand and one great heap of black.

"Ghost of the Future!" he exclaimed, "I fear you more than any Spectre I have seen. But, as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart. Will you not speak to me?"

It gave him no reply. The hand was pointed straight before them.

"Lead on!" said Scrooge. "Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit!"

The Phantom moved away as it had come towards him. Scrooge followed in the shadow of its dress, which bore him up, he thought, and carried him along.

They scarcely seemed to enter the city; for the city rather seemed to spring up about them, and encompass them of its own act. But there they were, in the heart of it; on 'Change, amongst the merchants; who hurried up and down, and chinked the money in their pockets, and conversed in groups, and looked at their watches, and trifled thoughtfully with their great gold seals; and so forth, as Scrooge had seen them often.

The Spirit stopped beside one little knot of business men. Observing that the hand was pointed to them, Scrooge advanced to listen to their talk.

"No," said a great fat man with a monstrous chin, "I don't know much about it, either way. I only know he's dead."

"When did he die?" inquired another.

"Last night, I believe."

"Why, what was the matter with him?" asked a third, taking a vast quantity of snuff out of a very large snuffbox. "I thought he'd never die."

"God knows," said the first, with a yawn.

"What has he done with his money?" asked a red-faced gentleman with a pendulous excrescence on the end of his nose, that shook like the gills of a turkey-cock.

"I haven't heard," said the man with the large chin, yawning again. "Left it to his Company, perhaps. He hasn't left it to *me*. That's all I know."

This pleasantry was received with a general laugh.

"It's likely to be a very cheap funeral," said the same speaker; "for upon my life I don't know of anybody to go to it. Suppose we make up a party and volunteer?"

"I don't mind going if a lunch is provided," observed the gentleman with the excrescence on his nose. "But I must be fed, if I make one."

Another laugh.

"Well, I am the most disinterested among you, after all," said the first speaker, "for I never wear black gloves, and I never eat lunch. But I'll offer to go, if anybody else will. When I come to think of it, I'm not at all sure that I wasn't his most particular friend; for we used to stop and speak whenever we met. Bye, bye!"

Speakers and listeners strolled away, and mixed with other groups. Scrooge knew the men, and looked towards the Spirit for an explanation.

The Phantom glided on into a street. Its finger pointed to two persons meeting. Scrooge listened again, thinking that the explanation might lie here.

He knew these men, also, perfectly. They were men of business: very wealthy, and of great importance. He had made a point always of standing well in their esteem—in a business point of view, that is; strictly in a business point of view.

"How are you?" said one.

"How are you?" returned the other.

"Well!" said the first. "Old Scratch has got his own at last, hey?"

"So I am told," returned the second. "Cold, isn't it?"

"Seasonable for Christmas time. You're not a skater, I suppose?"

"No. No. Something else to think of. Good morning!" Not another word. That was their meeting, their conversation, and their parting.

Scrooge was at first inclined to be surprised that the Spirit should attach importance to conversations apparently so trivial; but feeling assured that they must have some hidden purpose, he set himself to consider what it was likely to be. They could scarcely be supposed to have any bearing on the death of Jacob, his old partner, for that was Past, and this Ghost's province was the Future. Nor could he think of any one immediately connected with himself, to whom he could apply them. But nothing doubting that to whomsoever they applied they had some latent moral for his own improvement, he resolved to treasure up every word he heard, and everything he saw; and especially to observe the shadow of himself when it appeared. For he had an expectation that the conduct of his future self would give him the clue he missed, and would render the solution of these riddles easy.

"SO I AM TOLD," RETURNED THE SECOND

He looked about in that very place for his own image; but another man stood in his accustomed corner, and though the clock pointed to his usual time of day for being there, he saw no likeness of himself among the multitudes that poured in through the Porch. It gave him little surprise, however; for he had been revolving in his mind a change of life, and thought and hoped he saw his new-born resolutions carried out in this.

Quiet and dark, beside him stood the Phantom, with its outstretched hand. When he roused himself from his thoughtful quest, he fancied from the turn of the hand, and its situation in reference to himself, that the Unseen Eyes were looking at him keenly. It made him shudder and feel very cold.

They left the busy scene, and went into an obscure part of the town, where Scrooge had never penetrated before, although he recognized its situation, and its bad repute. The ways were foul and narrow; the shops and houses wretched; the people half-naked, drunken, slipshod, ugly. Alleys and archways, like so many cesspools, disgorged their offences of smell, and dirt, and life, upon the straggling streets; and the whole quarter reeked with crime, with filth, and misery.

Far in this den of infamous resort, there was a low-browed, beetling shop, below a pent-house roof, where iron, old rags, bottles, bones, and greasy offal, were bought. Upon the floor within, were piled up heaps of rusty keys, nails, chains, hinges, files, scales, weights, and refuse iron of all kinds. Secrets that few would like to scrutinise were bred and hidden in mountains of unseemly rags, masses of corrupted fat, and sepulchres of bones. Sitting in among the wares he dealt in, by a charcoal-stove, made of old bricks, was a grey-haired rascal, nearly seventy years of age; who had screened himself from the cold air without, by a frowsy curtaining of miscellaneous tatters, hung upon a line; and smoked his pipe in all the luxury of calm retirement.

Scrooge and the Phantom came into the presence of this man, just as a woman with a heavy bundle slunk into the shop. But she had scarcely entered, when another woman, similarly laden, came in too; and she was closely followed by a man in faded black, who was no less startled by the sight of them, than they had been upon the recognition of each other. After a short period of blank astonishment, in which the old man with the pipe had joined them, they all three burst into a laugh.

"Let the charwoman alone to be the first!" cried she who had entered first. "Let the laundress alone to be the second; and let the undertaker's man alone to be the third. Look here, old Joe, here's a chance! If we haven't all three met here without meaning it!"

"You couldn't have met in a better place," said old Joe, removing his pipe from his mouth. "Come into the parlour. You were made free of it long ago, you know; and the other two ain't strangers. Stop till I shut the door of the shop. Ah! How it skreeks! There an't such a rusty bit of metal in the place as its own hinges, I believe; and I'm sure there's no such old bones here, as mine. Ha, ha! We're all suitable to our calling, we're well matched. Come into the parlour. Come into the parlour."

The parlour was the space behind the screen of rags. The old man raked the fire together with an old stair-rod, and having trimmed his smoky lamp (for it was night), with the stem of his pipe, put it in his mouth again.

While he did this, the woman who had already spoken, threw her bundle on the floor, and sat down in a flaunting manner on a stool; crossing her elbows on her knees, and looking with a bold defiance at the other two.

"What odds then! What odds, Mrs. Dilber?" said the woman. "Every person has a right to take care of themselves. *He* always did!"

"That's true, indeed!" said the laundress. "No man more so."

"Why, then, don't stand staring as if you was afraid, woman; who's the wiser? We're not going to pick holes in each other's coats, I suppose?"

"No, indeed!" said Mrs. Dilber and the man together. "We should hope not."

"Very well, then!" cried the woman. "That's enough. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose."

"No, indeed," said Mrs. Dilber, laughing.

"If he wanted to keep 'em after he was dead, a wicked old screw," pursued the woman, "why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with Death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself."

"It's the truest word that ever was spoke," said Mrs. Dilber. "It's a judgment on him."

"I wish it was a little heavier one," replied the woman; "and it should have been, you may depend upon it, if I could have laid my hands on anything else. Open that bundle, old Joe, and let me know the value of it. Speak out plain. I'm not afraid to be the first, nor afraid for them to see it. We knew pretty well that we were helping ourselves, before we met here, I believe. It's no sin. Open the bundle, Joe."

But the gallantry of her friends would not allow of this; and the man in faded black, mounting the breach first, produced *his* plunder. It was not extensive. A seal or two, a pencil-case, a pair of sleeve-buttons, and a brooch of no great value, were all. They were severally examined and appraised by old Joe, who chalked the sums he was disposed to give for each, upon the wall, and added them up into a total when he found there was nothing more to come.

"That's your account," said Joe, "and I wouldn't give another sixpence, if I was to be boiled for not doing it. Who's next?"

Mrs. Dilber was next. Sheets and towels, a little wearing apparel, two old-fashioned silver teaspoons, a pair of sugar-tongs, and a few boots. Her account was stated on the wall in the same manner.

"I always give too much to ladies. It's a weakness of mine, and that's the way I ruin myself," said old Joe. "That's your account. If you asked me for another penny, and made it an open question, I'd repent of being so liberal and knock off half-a-crown."

"And now undo *my* bundle, Joe," said the first woman.

Joe went down on his knees for the greater convenience of opening it, and having unfastened a great many knots, dragged out a large and heavy roll of some dark stuff.

"What do you call this?" said Joe. "Bed-curtains!"

"Ah!" returned the woman, laughing and leaning forward on her crossed arms. "Bed-curtains!"

"You don't mean to say you took 'em down, rings and all, with him lying there?" said Joe.

"Yes I do," replied the woman. "Why not?"

"You were born to make your fortune," said Joe, "and you'll certainly do it."

"I certainly shan't hold my hand, when I can get anything in it by reaching it out, for the sake of such a man as He was, I promise you, Joe," returned the woman coolly. "Don't drop that oil upon the blankets, now."

"His blankets?" asked Joe.

"Whose else's do you think?" replied the woman. "He isn't likely to take cold without 'em, I dare say."

"I hope he didn't die of anything catching? Eh?" said old Joe, stopping in his work, and looking up.

"Don't you be afraid of that," returned the woman. "I an't so fond of his company that I'd loiter about him for such things, if he did. Ah! you may look through that shirt till your eyes ache; but you won't find a hole in it, nor a threadbare place. It's the best he had, and a fine one too. They'd have wasted it, if it hadn't been for me."

"What do you call wasting of it?" asked old Joe.

"Putting it on him to be buried in, to be sure," replied the woman with a laugh. "Somebody was fool enough to do it, but I took it off again. If calico an't good enough for such a purpose, it isn't good enough for anything. He can't look uglier than he did in that one."

Scrooge listened to this dialogue in horror. As they sat grouped about their spoil, in the scanty light afforded by the old man's lamp, he viewed them with a detestation and disgust, which could hardly have been greater, though they had been obscene demons, marketing the corpse itself.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the same woman, when old Joe, producing a flannel bag with money in it, told out their several gains upon the ground. "This is the end of it, you see! He frightened every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, shuddering from head to foot. "I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way, now. Merciful Heaven, what is this!"

He recoiled in terror, for the scene had changed, and now he almost touched a bed: a bare, uncurtained bed: on which, beneath a ragged sheet, there lay a something covered up, which, though it was dumb, announced itself in awful language.

The room was very dark, too dark to be observed with any accuracy, though Scrooge glanced round it in obedience to a secret impulse, anxious to know what kind of room it was.

A pale light, rising in the outer air, fell straight upon the bed; and on it, plundered and bereft, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man.

Scrooge glanced towards the Phantom. Its steady hand was pointed to the head. The cover was so carelessly adjusted that the slightest raising of it, the motion of a finger upon Scrooge's part, would have disclosed the face. He thought of it, felt how easy it would be to do, and longed to do it; but had no more power to withdraw the veil than to dismiss the spectre at his side.

Oh cold, cold, rigid, dreadful Death, set up thine altar here, and dress it with such terrors as thou hast at thy command: for this is thy dominion! But of the loved, revered, and honoured head, thou canst not turn one hair to thy dread purposes, or make one feature odious. It is not that the hand is heavy and will fall down when released; it is not that the heart and pulse are still; but that the hand was open, generous, and true; the heart brave, warm, and tender; and the pulse a man's. Strike, Shadow, strike! And see his good deeds springing from the wound, to sow the world with life immortal!

No voice pronounced these words in Scrooge's ears, and yet he heard them when he looked upon the bed. He thought, if this man could be raised up now, what would be his foremost thoughts? Avarice, hard dealing, griping cares? They have brought him to a rich end, truly!

He lay, in the dark empty house, with not a man, a woman, or a child, to say that he was kind to me in this or that, and for the memory of one kind word I will be kind to him. A cat was tearing at the door, and there was a sound of gnawing rats beneath the hearth-stone. What *they* wanted in the room of death, and why they were so restless and disturbed, Scrooge did not dare to think.

"Spirit!" he said, "this is a fearful place. In leaving it, I shall not leave its lesson, trust me. Let us go!"

Still the Ghost pointed with an unmoved finger to the head.

"I understand you," Scrooge returned, "and I would do it, if I could. But I have not the power, Spirit. I have not the power."

Again it seemed to look upon him.

"If there is any person in the town, who feels emotion caused by this man's death," said Scrooge, quite agonized, "show that person to me, Spirit, I beseech you!"

The Phantom spread its dark robe before him for a moment, like a wing; and withdrawing it, revealed a room by daylight, where a mother and her children were.

She was expecting some one, and with anxious eagerness; for she walked up and down the room; started at every sound; looked out from the window; glanced at the clock; tried, but in vain, to work with her needle; and could hardly bear the voices of the children in their play.

At length the long-expected knock was heard. She hurried to the door, and met her husband; a man whose face was careworn and depressed, though he was young. There was a remarkable expression in it now; a kind of serious delight of which he felt ashamed, and which he struggled to repress.

He sat down to the dinner that had been hoarding for him by the fire; and when she asked him faintly what news (which was not until after a long silence) he appeared embarrassed how to answer.

"Is it good," she said, "or bad?"—to help him.

"Bad," he answered.

"We are quite ruined?"

"No. There is hope yet, Caroline."

"If *he* relents," she said, amazed, "there is! Nothing is past hope, if such a miracle has happened."

"He is past relenting," said her husband. "He is dead."

She was a mild and patient creature if her face spoke truth; but she was thankful in her soul to hear it, and she said so, with clasped hands. She prayed forgiveness the next moment, and was sorry; but the first was the emotion of her heart.

"What the half-drunken woman whom I told you of last night, said to me, when I tried to see him and obtain a week's delay; and what I thought was a mere excuse to avoid me; turns out to have been quite true. He was not only very ill, but dying, then."

"To whom will our debt be transferred?"

"I don't know. But before that time we shall be ready with the money; and even though we were not, it would be bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a creditor in his successor. We may sleep to-night with light hearts, Caroline!"

Yes. Soften it as they would, their hearts were lighter. The children's faces, hushed, and clustered round to hear what they so little understood, were brighter; and it was a happier house for this man's death; The only emotion that the Ghost could show him, caused by the event, was one of pleasure.

"Let me see some tenderness connected with a death," said Scrooge; "or that dark chamber, Spirit, which we left just now, will be for ever present to me."

The Ghost conducted him through several streets familiar to his feet; and as they went along, Scrooge looked here and there to find himself, but nowhere was he to be seen. They entered poor Bob Cratchit's house; the dwelling he had visited before; and found the mother and the children seated round the fire.

Quiet. Very quiet. The noisy little Cratchits were as still as statues in one corner, and sat looking up at Peter, who had a book before him. The mother and her daughter were engaged in sewing. But surely they were very quiet!

" 'And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them.' "

Where had Scrooge heard those words? He had not dreamed them. The boy must have read them out, as he and the Spirit crossed the threshold. Why did he not go on?

The mother laid her work upon the table, and put her hand up to her face.

"The colour hurts my eyes," she said.

The colour? Ah, poor Tiny Tim!

"They're better now again," said Cratchit's wife. "It makes them weak by candlelight; and I wouldn't show weak eyes to your father when he comes home, for the world. It must be near his time."

"Past it rather," Peter answered, shutting up his book. "But I think he's walked a little slower than he used, these few last evenings, mother."

They were very quiet again. At last she said, and in a steady cheerful voice, that only faltered once:

"I have known him walk with—I have known him walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder, very fast indeed."

"And so have I," cried Peter. "Often."

"And so have I," exclaimed another. So had all.

"But he was very light to carry," she resumed, intent upon her work, "and his father loved him so, that it was no trouble—no trouble. And there is your father at the door!"

She hurried out to meet him; and little Bob in his comforter—he had need of it, poor fellow—came in. His tea was ready for him on the hob, and they all tried who should help him to it most. Then the two young Cratchits got upon his knees and laid, each child, a little cheek against his face, as if they said, "Don't mind it, father. Don't be grieved!"

Bob was very cheerful with them, and spoke pleasantly to all the family. He looked at the work upon the table, and praised the industry and speed of Mrs. Cratchit and the girls. They would be done long before Sunday he said.

"Sunday! You went to-day then, Robert?" said his wife.

"Yes, my dear," returned Bob. "I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you'll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on a Sunday. My little, little child!" cried Bob. "My little child!"

He broke down all at once. He couldn't help it. If he could have helped it, he and his child would have been farther apart perhaps than they were.

He left the room, and went upstairs into the room above, which was lighted cheerfully, and hung with Christmas. There was a chair set close beside the child, and there were signs of some one having been there, lately. Poor Bob sat down in it, and when he had thought a little and composed himself, he kissed the little face. He was reconciled to what had happened, and went down again quite happy.

They drew about the fire, and talked; the girls and mother working still. Bob told them of the extraordinary kindness of Mr. Scrooge's nephew, whom he had scarcely seen but once, and who, meeting him in the street that day, and seeing that he looked a little—"just a little down you know," said Bob, inquired what had happened to distress him. "On which," said Bob, "for he is the pleasantest-spoken gentleman you ever heard, I told him. 'I am heartily sorry for it, Mr. Cratchit,' he said, 'and heartily sorry for your good wife.' By the bye, how he ever knew *that,* I don't know."

"Knew what, my dear?"

"Why, that you were a good wife," replied Bob.

"Everybody knows that!" said Peter.

"Very well observed, my boy!" cried Bob. "I hope they do. 'Heartily sorry,' he said, 'for your good wife. If I can be of service to you in any way,' he said, giving me his card, 'that's where I live. Pray come to me.' Now, it wasn't," cried Bob, "for the sake of anything he might be able to do for us, so much as for his kind way, that this was quite delightful. It really seemed as if he had known our Tiny Tim, and felt with us."

"I'm sure he's a good soul!" said Mrs. Cratchit.

"You would be surer of it, my dear," returned Bob, "if you saw and spoke to him. I shouldn't be at all surprised, mark what I say, if he got Peter a better situation."

"Only hear that, Peter," said Mrs. Cratchit.

"And then," cried one of the girls, "Peter will be keeping company with some one, and setting up for himself."

"Get along with you!" retorted Peter, grinning.

"It's just as likely as not," said Bob, "one of these days; though there's plenty of time for that, my dear. But however and whenever we part from one another, I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim—shall we—or this first parting that there was among us?"

"Never, father!" cried they all.

"And I know," said Bob, "I know, my dears, that when we recollect how patient and how mild he was; although he was a little, little child; we shall not quarrel easily among ourselves, and forget poor Tiny Tim in doing it."

"No, never, father!" they all cried again.

"I am very happy," said little Bob, "I am very happy!"

Mrs. Cratchit kissed him, his daughters kissed him, the two young Cratchits kissed him, and Peter and himself shook hands. Spirit of Tiny Tim, thy childish essence was from God!

"Spectre," said Scrooge, "something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I know it, but I know not how. Tell me what man that was whom we saw lying dead?"

The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come conveyed him, as before—though at a different time, he thought: indeed, there seemed no order in these latter visions, save that they were in the Future—into the resorts of business men, but showed him not himself. Indeed, the Spirit did not pause, but went straight on, as to the end just now desired, until besought by Scrooge to tarry for a moment.

"This court," said Scrooge, "through which we hurry now, is where my place of occupation is, and has been for a length of time. I see the house. Let me behold what I shall be, in days to come!"

The Spirit stopped; the hand was pointed elsewhere.

"The house is yonder," Scrooge exclaimed, "Why do you point away?"

The inexorable finger underwent no change.

Scrooge hastened to the window of his office, and looked in. It was an office still, but not his. The furniture was not the same, and the figure in the chair was not himself. The Phantom pointed as before. He joined it once again, and wondering why and whither he had gone, accompanied it until they reached an iron gate. He paused to look round before entering.

A churchyard. Here, then, the wretched man whose name he had now to learn, lay underneath the ground. It was a worthy place. Walled in by houses; overrun by grass and weeds, the growth of vegetation's death, not life; choked up with too much burying; fat with repleted appetite. A worthy place!

The Spirit stood among the graves, and pointed down to One. He advanced towards it trembling. The Phantom was exactly as it had been, but he dreaded that he saw new meaning in its solemn shape.

"Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point," said Scrooge, "answer me one question. Are these shadows of the things that Will be, or are they shadows of things that May be, only?"

Still the Ghost pointed downward to the grave by which it stood.

"Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead," said Scrooge. "But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!"

The Spirit was immovable as ever.

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, EBENEZER SCROOGE.

HE READ HIS OWN NAME

"Am *I* that man who lay upon the bed?" he cried, upon his knees.

The finger pointed from the grave to him, and back again.

"No, Spirit! Oh no, no!"

The finger still was there.

"Spirit!" he cried, tight clutching at its robe, hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse. Why show me this, if I am past all hope!"

For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

"Good Spirit," he pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it: "Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!"

The kind hand trembled.

"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone!"

In his agony, he caught the spectral hand. It sought to free itself, but he was strong in his entreaty, and detained it. The Spirit, stronger yet, repulsed him.

Holding up his hands in one last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom's hood and dress. It shrank, collapsed, and dwindled down into a bedpost.

STAVE FIVE

The End of It

YES! and the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own. Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!

"I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!" Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. "The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven and the Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob, on my knees!"

He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call. He had been sobbing violently in his conflict with the Spirit, and his face was wet with tears.

"They are not torn down," cried Scrooge, folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms, "they are not torn down, rings and all. They are here: I am here: the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be. I know they will!"

His hands were busy with his garments all this time: turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance.

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect Laocoön[18] of himself with his stockings. "I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel,

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[18] The Laocoön is a famous ancient statue of a Trojan priest, Laocoön, and his two sons, struggling in the grip of two monstrous

I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A Merry Christmas to everybody! A Happy New Year to all the world. Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!"

He had frisked into the sitting-room, and was now standing there: perfectly winded.

"There's the saucepan that the gruel was in!" cried Scrooge, starting off again, and frisking round the fireplace. "There's the door, by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered! There's the corner where the Ghost of Christmas Present sat! There's the window where I saw the wandering Spirits! It's all right, it's all true, it all happened. Ha, ha, ha!"

Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh. The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs!

"I don't know what day of the month it is!" said Scrooge. "I don't know how long I've been among the Spirits. I don't know anything. I'm quite a baby. Never mind. I don't care. I'd rather be a baby. Hallo! Whoop! Hallo here!"

He was checked in his transports by the churches ringing out the lustiest peals he had ever heard. Clash, clang, hammer, ding, dong, bell. Bell, dong, ding, hammer, clang, clash! Oh, glorious, glorious!

Running to the window, he opened it, and put out his head. No fog, no mist; clear, bright, jovial, stirring, cold; cold, piping for the blood to dance to; golden sunlight; heavenly sky; sweet fresh air; merry bells. Oh, glorious! Glorious!

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serpents. You have doubtless seen pictures of the group. Dickens's figure gives us a humorously exaggerated picture of Scrooge and his stockings.

"What's to-day?" cried Scrooge, calling downward to a boy in Sunday clothes, who perhaps had loitered in to look about him.

"EH?" returned the boy, with all his might of wonder.

HE STOOD BY THE WINDOW—GLORIOUS!

"What's to-day, my fine fellow?" said Scrooge.

"To-day!" replied the boy. "Why, CHRISTMAS DAY."

"It's Christmas Day!" said Scrooge to himself. "I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can. Of course they can. Hallo, my fine fellow!" "Hallo!" returned the boy.

"Do you know the poulterer's, in the next street but one, at the corner?" Scrooge inquired.

"I should hope I did," replied the lad.

"An intelligent boy!" said Scrooge. "A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was hanging up there? Not the little prize turkey: the big one?"

"What, the one as big as me?" returned the boy.

"What a delightful boy!" said Scrooge. "It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck!"

"It's hanging there now," replied the boy.

"Is it?" said Scrooge. "Go and buy it."

"Walk-ER!"[19] exclaimed the boy.

"No, no," said Scrooge, "I am in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, that I may give them the direction where to take it. Come back with the man, and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes, and I'll give you half-a-crown!"

The boy was off like a shot. He must have had a steady hand at a trigger who could have got a shot off half so fast.

"I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's!" whispered Scrooge, rubbing his hands, and splitting with a laugh. "He shan't know who sends it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. Joe Miller[20] never made such a joke as sending it to Bob's will be!"

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[19] This is a slang expression, used to express incredulity. It has somewhat the same meaning as the slang phrase heard in the United States—"Over the left."

[20] Joe Miller was an English comedian who lived from 1684 to 1738. The year after his death there appeared a little book called *Joe Miller's Jests*. These stories and jokes, however, were not written by Miller.

The hand in which he wrote the address was not a steady one, but write it he did, somehow, and went downstairs to open the street door, ready for the coming of the poulterer's man. As he stood there, waiting his arrival, the knocker caught his eye.

"I shall love it, as long as I live!" cried Scrooge, patting it with his hand. "I scarcely ever looked at it before. What an honest expression it has in its face! It's a wonderful knocker!—Here's the turkey. Hallo! Whoop! How are you! Merry Christmas!"

It *was* a turkey! He could never have stood upon his legs, that bird. He would have snapped 'em short off in a minute, like sticks of sealing-wax.

"Why, it's impossible to carry that to Camden Town," said Scrooge. "You must have a cab."

The chuckle with which he said this, and the chuckle with which he paid for the turkey, and the chuckle with which he paid for the cab, and the chuckle with which he recompensed the boy, were only to be exceeded by the chuckle with which he sat down breathless in his chair again, and chuckled till he cried.

Shaving was not an easy task, for his hand continued to shake very much; and shaving requires attention, even when you don't dance while you are at it. But if he had cut the end of his nose off, he would have put a piece of sticking-plaster over it, and been quite satisfied.

He dressed himself "all in his best," and at last got out into the streets. The people were by this time pouring forth, as he had seen them with the Ghost of Christmas Present; and walking with his hands behind him, Scrooge regarded every one with a delighted smile. He looked so irresistibly pleasant, in a word, that three or four good-humoured fellows said, "Good morning, Sir! A Merry Christmas to you!" And Scrooge said often afterwards, that of all the blithe sounds he had ever heard, those were the blithest in his ears.

He had not gone far, when coming on towards him he beheld the portly gentleman, who had walked into his counting-house the day before and said, "Scrooge and Marley's, I believe?" It sent a pang across his heart to think how this old gentleman would look upon him when they met; but he knew what path lay straight before him, and he took it.

"My dear Sir," said Scrooge, quickening his pace, and taking the old gentleman by both his hands. "How do you do? I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very kind of you. A Merry Christmas to you, Sir!"

"Mr. Scrooge?"

"Yes," said Scrooge. "That is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness"—here Scrooge whispered in his ear.

"Lord bless me," cried the gentleman, as if his breath were gone. "My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you serious?"

"If you please," said Scrooge. "Not a farthing less. A great many back-payments are included in it, I assure you. Will you do me that favour?"

"My dear Sir," said the other, shaking hands with him. "I don't know what to say to such munifi——"

"Don't say anything, please," retorted Scrooge. "Come and see me. Will you come and see me?"

"I will!" cried the old gentleman. And it was clear he meant to do it.

"Thank'ee," said Scrooge. "I am much obliged to you. I thank you fifty times. Bless you!"

He went to church, and walked about the streets, and watched the people hurrying to and fro, and patted children on the head, and questioned beggars, and looked down into the kitchens of houses, and up to the windows; and found that everything could yield him pleasure. He had never dreamed that any walk—that anything—could give him so much happiness. In the afternoon, he turned his steps towards his nephew's house. He passed the door a dozen times, before he had the courage to go up and knock. But he made a dash, and did it.

"Is your master at home, my dear?" said Scrooge to the girl. Nice girl! Very.

"Yes, Sir."

"Where is he, my love?" said Scrooge.

"He's in the dining-room, Sir, along with mistress. I'll show you upstairs, if you please."

"Thank'ee. He knows me," said Scrooge, with his hand already on the dining-room lock. "I'll go in here, my dear."

He turned it gently, and sidled his face in, round the door. They were looking at the table (which was spread out in great array); for these young housekeepers are always nervous on such points, and like to see that everything is right.

"Fred!" said Scrooge.

Dear heart alive, how his niece by marriage started! Scrooge had forgotten, for the moment, about her sitting in the corner with the footsool, or he wouldn't have done it, on any account.

"Why bless my soul!" cried Fred, "who's that?"

"It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?"

Let him in! It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off. He was at home in five minutes. Nothing could be heartier. His niece looked just the same. So did Topper when *he* came. So did the plump sister, when *she* came. So did every one when *they* came. Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, won-der-ful happiness!

But he was early at the office next morning. Oh he was early there. If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late! That was the thing he had set his heart upon.

And he did it; yes he did! The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter past. No Bob. He was full eighteen minutes and a half behind his time. Scrooge sat with his door wide open, that he might see him come into the Tank. His hat was off, before he opened the door; his comforter too. He was on his stool in a jiffy; driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o'clock.

"Hallo!" growled Scrooge in his accustomed voice as near as he could feign it. "What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?"

"I am very sorry, Sir," said Bob. "I *am* behind my time."

"You are?" repeated Scrooge. "Yes. I think you are. Step this way, Sir, if you please."

"It's only once a year, Sir," pleaded Bob, appearing from the Tank. "It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, Sir."

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend," said Scrooge. "I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore," he continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again: "and therefore I am about to raise your salary!"

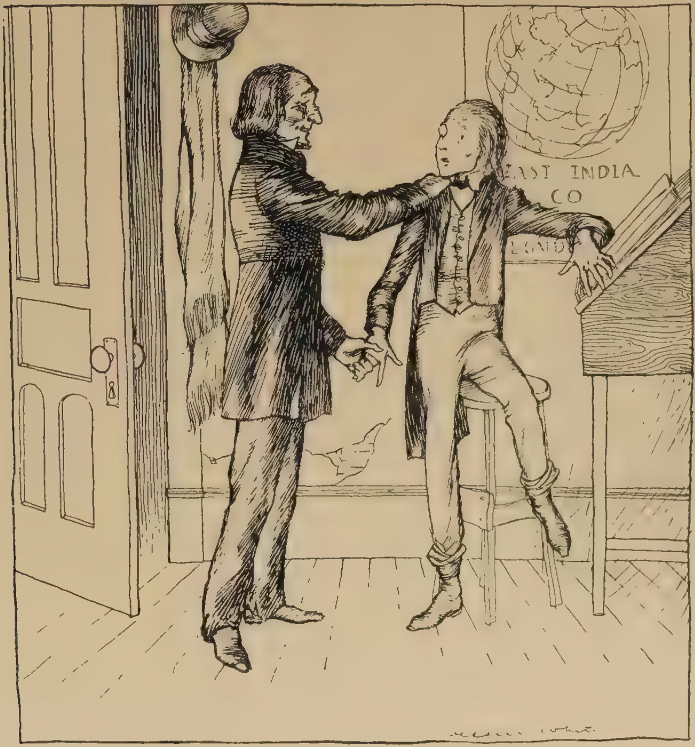
Bob trembled, and got a little nearer to the ruler. He had a momentary idea of knocking Scrooge down with it; holding him; and calling to the people in the court for help and a strait-waist-coat.

"A Merry Christmas, Bob!" said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. "A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavor to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!"

Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did NOT die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh, and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter in the outset; and knowing that such as these would be blind anyway, he thought it quite as well that they should wrinkle up their eyes in grins, as have the malady in less attractive forms.

His own heart laughed: and that was quite enough for him.

He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!



"A MERRY CHRISTMAS, BOB!"

CHRISTMAS IN OLD TIME

By SIR WALTER SCOTT

HEAP on more wood![1]—the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deem'd the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer:[2]
And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had roll'd,
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.[3]
Domestic and religious rite[4]
Gave honor to the holy night;
On Christmas Eve the bells were rung;[5]
On Chrismas Eve the mass[6] was sung:
That only night in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.[7]
The damsel donn'd her kirtle sheen;[8]

1. Is there a stove or a fireplace in the room where the poet sees Christmas kept?

2. What is cheer? What is festal cheer?

3. What is a "train"? How could it be called a hospitable train? Whose train was it?

4. What is a rite?

5. What bells were rung?

6. What is a mass?

7. What is a *stoled* priest? What is a chalice? What did the priest do when he reared the chalice?

8. The kirtle was a dress-skirt or outer petticoat. *Sheen* means *gay* or *bright*.

The hall was dress'd with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.[9]
Then open'd wide the baron's hall
To vassal,[10] tenant,[11] serf,[12] and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,[13]
And ceremony doff'd his pride.[14]
The heir, with roses in his shoes,[15]
That night might village partner choose;[16]
The lord, underogating,[17] share
The vulgar game of "post and pair."[18]
All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of Salvation down.[19]

The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;

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[9] What is mistletoe? Is there anything peculiar in its habits of growth? What did they want of it? What custom is still said to follow the use of mistletoe at Christmastime?

[10] A vassal was one of the followers of the baron and paid for protection or for lands he held by fighting in the baron's troops or rendering some other service.

[11] A tenant held lands or houses, for which he paid some form of rent.

[12] A serf was a slave.

[13] At Christmastime even the powerful were willing to cease from ruling and join with the common people.

[14] Instead of grand ceremonies, everybody joined in simple amusements, without pride or prejudice.

[15] Who was the heir? What was he heir to? Why did he have roses in his shoes?

[16] Was he permitted to dance with village maidens at any other time?

[17] Without losing any of his dignity.

[18] An old-fashioned game of cards.

[19] Who brought the tidings of Salvation? To whom was it brought? Who was "the crown"?

The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.[20]
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,[21]
By old blue-coated serving-man;
Then the grim boar's head frown'd on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.[22]
Well can the green-garb'd ranger[23] tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.[24]
The wassail[25] round, in good brown bowls,
Garnish'd with ribbons, blithely trowls.[26]

There the huge sirloin reek'd; hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;[27]
Nor fail'd old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide, her savory goose.
Then came the merry maskers in,

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[20] A lord was one who had power and authority, while a squire was merely an attendant upon a lord.

[21] Brawn, in England, is a preparation of meat, generally sheep's head, pig's head, hock of beef, or boar's meat, boiled and seasoned, and run into jelly moulds.

[22] What are bays? What is rosemary? Why should the boar's head be called *crested?* Where was it? Why was it there? Why does the poet say it *frowned* on high?

[23] Who was a ranger? What did he do? Do you see any reason for his being green-garbed?

[24] What is meant by *baiting*? Who tore the dogs? Why did he tear them? What made the monster fall?

[25] Wassail (*wossil*): the liquor in which they drank their toasts, and which signified the good cheer of Christmastime.

[26] Moves about; that is, the liquor in good brown bowls was merrily passed along the table from hand to hand.

[27] What was near the sirloin? How many kinds of meat were there on the table? Is anything mentioned besides meat? Do you suppose they had other things to eat? Did they have bread and vegetables?

And carols roar'd with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery;[28]
White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;—[29]
But, O! what maskers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms, half so light![30]
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.

[28] In the *mumming* or acting of these maskers could be seen traces of the ancient mystic plays in which religious lessons were given in plays that were acted with the approval of the church.

[29] Did the maskers have rich costumes? What did they wear over their faces? How did they conceal their clothing?

[30] Does the poet think that rich maskers would enjoy their pleasure as much as the old-fashioned Christmas merrymakers?

ELEGY

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

By Thomas Gray

Note.—A mournful song written to express grief at the loss of some friend or relative, and at the same time to praise the dead person, is known as an elegy. Sometimes the word has a wider meaning, and includes a poem which expresses the same ideas but applies them to a class of people rather than to an individual. Such a poem is not so personal, and for that very reason it will be appreciated by a larger number of readers. Gray's *Elegy* is of the latter class—is perhaps the one great poem of that class; for in all probability more people have loved it and found in its gentle sadness, its exquisite phraseology and its musical lines more genuine charm than in any similar poem in the language.

To one who already loves it, any comments on the poem may at first thought seem like desecration, but, on the other hand, there is so much more in the *Elegy* than appears at first glance that it is worth while to read it in the light of another's eyes. Not a few persons find some enjoyment in reading, but fall far short of the highest pleasure because of their failure really to comprehend the meaning of certain words and forms of expression. For that reason, notes are appended where they may be needed. A good reader is never troubled by notes at the bottom of the page. If they are of no interest or benefit to him, he knows it with a glance and passes on with his reading. If the note is helpful, he gathers the information and returns to his reading, beginning not at the word from which the reference was made, but at the beginning of the sentence or stanza; then he loses nothing by going to the footnote.

THE curfew[1] tolls the knell[2] of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

HOMEWARD PLODS HIS WEARY WAY

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;[3]

[1] In some of our American towns and cities a curfew bell is rung as a signal that the children must leave the streets and go to their homes. Many years ago it was the custom in English villages to ring a bell at nightfall as a signal for people to cover their fires with ashes to preserve till morning, and as a signal for bed. The word *curfew*, in fact, is from the French, and means *cover fire.*

[2] The word *knell* suggests death, and gives the first mournful note to the poem.

[3] The sheep are shut up for the night in the *folds* or pens. What are the *tinklings?* Why should they be called *drowsy?*

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower[4]
  The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
  Molest her ancient solitary reign.[5]

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
  Where heaves the turf in many a mold'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
  The rude[6] forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
  The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion,[7] or the echoing horn,
  No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.[8]

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
  Or busy housewife ply her evening care;[9]

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[4] The poem is supposed to have been written in the yard of Stoke-Pogis church, a little building with a square tower, the whole covered with a riotous growth of ivy vines. The church is in the country, not many miles from Windsor Castle; and even to this day the beautiful landscape preserves the rural charms it had in Gray's time. We must not suppose that Gray actually sat in the churchyard and wrote his lines. As a matter of fact, he was a very careful and painstaking writer, and for eight years was at work on this poem, selecting each word so that it should express just the shade of meaning he wanted and give the perfect melody he sought. However, he did begin the poem at Stoke in October or November of 1742 and continued it there in November, 1749; but it was finished in Cambridge in June, 1750.

[5] *Reign* here means *dominion* or *possessions*. Why is the bird called a *moping* owl? Why is her reign *solitary*? What word is understood after *such* in the third line of this stanza?

[6] *Rude* means *uneducated, uncultured*, not *ill-mannered.*

[7] A clarion is a loud, clear-sounding trumpet.

[8] In the church are the tombs of the wealthy and titled of the neighborhood, and in the building and on the walls are monuments that tell the virtues of the lordly dead. It is outside, however, under the sod, in their narrow cells, that the virtuous poor, the real subjects of the poet's thoughts, lie in quiet slumbers.

[9] What evening cares has the busy housewife? Was she making the clothes of her children, knitting, mending, darning, after the supper dishes were put away?

No children run to lisp their sire's return,[10]
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe[11] has broke;
How jocund[12] did they drive their team a-field!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition[13] mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await[14] alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.[15]

---

[10] Where were the children? Were they waiting for their father's return? To whom would they run to tell of his coming?

[11] The *glebe* is the turf. Why should it be called *stubborn*?

[12] *Jocund* means *joyful*.

[13] The word *Ambition* begins with a capital letter because Gray speaks of ambition as though it were a person. The line means, "Let not ambitious persons speak lightly of the work the rude forefathers did."

[14] The inevitable hour (death) alike awaits the boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, and all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave.

[15] This is perhaps the most famous stanza in the poem. The following story is told of General Wolfe as he was leading his troops to the daring assault on Quebec in 1759: "At past midnight, when the heavens were hung black with clouds, and the boats were floating silently back with the tide to the intended landing-place at the chosen ascent to to the Plains of Abraham, he repeated in low tones to the officers around him this touching stanza of Gray's *Elegy*. 'Now, gentlemen,' said Wolfe, 'I would rather be the author of that poem than the possessor of the glory of beating the French to-morrow!' He fell the next day, and expired just as the shouts of the victory of the English fell upon his almost unconscious ears."

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
  If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where, through the long-drawn aisle[16] and fretted vault,
  The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust[17]
  Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke[18] the silent dust,
  Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
  Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;[19]
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
  Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.[20]

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
  Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;[21]
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
  And froze the genial current of the soul.

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16. Now, an aisle is the passageway between the pews or the seats in a church or other public hall: in the poem it means the passageways running to the sides of the main body of the church.

17. A storied urn is an urn-shaped monument on which are inscribed the virtues of the dead. Why should a *bust* be called *animated*? What is the *mansion* of *the fleeting breath*?

18. In this instance *provoke* means what it originally meant in the Latin language; namely, *call forth*.

19. The line means, "Some heart once filled with the heavenly inspiration."

20. A poet or musician is said to sing, and the lyre is the instrument with which the ancients accompanied their songs. *To wake to ecstasy the living lyre* is to write the noblest poetry, to sing the most inspired songs.

21. The books of the ancients were rolls of manuscripts. Did any of those persons resting in this neglected spot ever write great poetry, rule empires or sing inspiring songs? If not, what prevented them from doing such things if they had the ability?

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
  The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
  And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
  The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest—
  Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.[22]

Th' applause[23] of listening senates to command
  The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
  And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
  Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,[24]
  And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

[22] At first this stanza was written thus:

> "Some village Cato, who with dauntless breast
> The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
> Some mute, inglorious Tully here may rest;
> Some Caesar guiltless of his country's blood."

It is interesting to notice that at his first writing Gray selected three of the famous men of antiquity, but in his revision he substituted the names of three of his own countrymen. Who were Hampden, Milton and Cromwell?

[23] The three stanzas beginning at this point make but one sentence. Turned into prose the sentence would read: "Their lot forbade them to command the applause of listening senates, to despise the threats of pain and ruin, to scatter plenty o'er a smiling land, and read their history in a nation's eyes: their lot not only circumscribed their growing virtues but confined their crimes as well: it forbade them to wade through slaughter to a throne and shut the gates of mercy on mankind, to hide the struggling pangs of conscious truth, to quench the blushes of ingenuous shame, and to heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride with incense kindled at the Muse's flame."

[24] This line means that they could not become rulers by fighting and killing their fellowmen as Napoleon did not long afterward.

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
  To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
  With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.[25]

Far from the madding[26] crowd's ignoble strife,
  Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool, sequestered vale of life
  They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
  Some frail memorial[27] still erected nigh,
With uncouth[28] rhymes and shapeless sculpture
    decked,
  Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered
    Muse,
  The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
  That teach the rustic moralist to die.[29]

[25] Many of the English poets wrote in praise of the wealthy and titled in order to be paid or favored by the men they flattered. Gray thinks that such conduct is disgraceful, and rejoices that the rude forefathers of the hamlet were prevented from writing poetry for such an end. The Greeks thought poetry was inspired by one of the Muses, and genius is often spoken as a flame.

[26] *Madding* means *excited* or *raging*.

[27] The *frail memorials* were simple headstones, similar to those one may see in any country graveyard in America. On such headstones may often be seen *shapeless sculpture* that would almost provoke a smile, were it not for its pathetic meaning. A picture of Stoke-Pogis churchyard shows many stones of the ordinary type.

[28] The rhymes were *uncouth* in the sense that they were unlearned and unpolished.

[29] What facts were inscribed on the headstones? *Elegy* here means *praise*. Where were the texts strewn? Why were the texts called *holy*? What was the nature of the texts? Can you think of one that might have been used?

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, ling'ring look behind?[30]

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee,[31] who, mindful of th' unhonored dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

---

[30] This is one of the difficult stanzas, and there is some dispute as to its exact meaning, owing to the phrase, *to dumb forgetfulness a prey.* Perhaps the correct meaning is shown in the following prose version: "For who has ever died (resigned this pleasing, anxious being, left the warm precincts of this cheerful day), a prey to dumb forgetfulness, and cast not one longing, lingering look behind?"

[31] *Thee* refers to the poet, Gray himself. The remainder of the poem is personal. Summed up briefly it means that perhaps a sympathetic soul may some day come to inquire as to the poet's fate, and will be told by some hoary-headed swain a few of the poet's habits, and then will have pointed out to him the poet's own grave, on which may be read his epitaph.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies, he would rove;
Now drooping, woful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him from the customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree.
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he.

"The next, with dirges due,[32] in sad array,
Slow through the churchway path we saw him borne.—
Approach and read, for thou canst read, the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."[33]

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown:
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery, all he had, a tear,
He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

---

[32] *Due* means *appropriate* or *proper*.

[33] As first written, the poem contained the following stanza, placed before the epitaph; but in the final revision Gray rejected it as unworthy. It seems a very critical taste that would reject such lines as these:

"There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen are show'rs of violets found:
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground."

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,

THE COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
 The bosom of his Father and his God.

THOMAS GRAY was born in London on the twenty-sixth of December, 1716, and received his education at Cambridge, where he lived most of his quiet life and where he died in 1771. He was a small and graceful man with handsome features and rather an effeminate appearance, always dressed with extreme care. The greater part of his life was spent in neatly furnished rooms among his books, for he was a hard student, and became noted as one of the first scholars of his time. Among his friends he was witty and entertaining, but among strangers, quiet and reserved, almost timid. He loved his mother devotedly, and after her death he kept her dress neatly folded in his trunk, always by him. Innocent, well-meaning, gentle and retiring, he drew many warm friends to him, though his great learning and his fondness for giving information made many people think him something of a prig.

It might be considered a weakness in the *Elegy* that it drifts into an elegy on the writer, who becomes lost in the pathos of his own sad end. Yet, knowing the man as we do, we can understand his motives and forgive the seeming selfishness. He is not the only poet whose own sorrows, real or imaginary, were his greatest inspiration.

The metre of the *Elegy* had been used, before Gray's time, by Sir John Davies for his *Immortality of the Soul*, Sir William Davenant in his *Gondibert*, and Dryden in his *Annus Mirabilis*, and others; but in no instance so happily as here by Gray. In the *Elegy* the quatrain has not the somewhat disjunctive and isolating effect that it has in some other works where there is continuous argument or narrative that should run on with as few metrical hindrances as possible. It is well adapted to convey a series of solemn reflections, and that is its work in the *Elegy*.

THE SHIPWRECK[1]

By Robert Louis Stevenson

I WENT down, and drank my fill; and then came up, and got a blink at the moon; and then down again. They say a man sinks the third time for good. I cannot be made like other folk, then, for I would not like to write how often I went down or how often I came up again. All the while, I was being hurled along, and beaten upon and choked, and then swallowed whole; and the thing was so distracting to my wits, that I was neither sorry nor afraid.

Presently, I found I was holding to a spar, which helped me somewhat. And then all of a sudden I was in quiet water, and began to come to myself.

It was the spare yard I had got hold of, and I was amazed to see how far I had traveled from the brig. I hailed her, indeed; but it was plain she was already out of cry. She was still holding together; but whether or not they had yet launched the boat, I was too far off and too low down to see.

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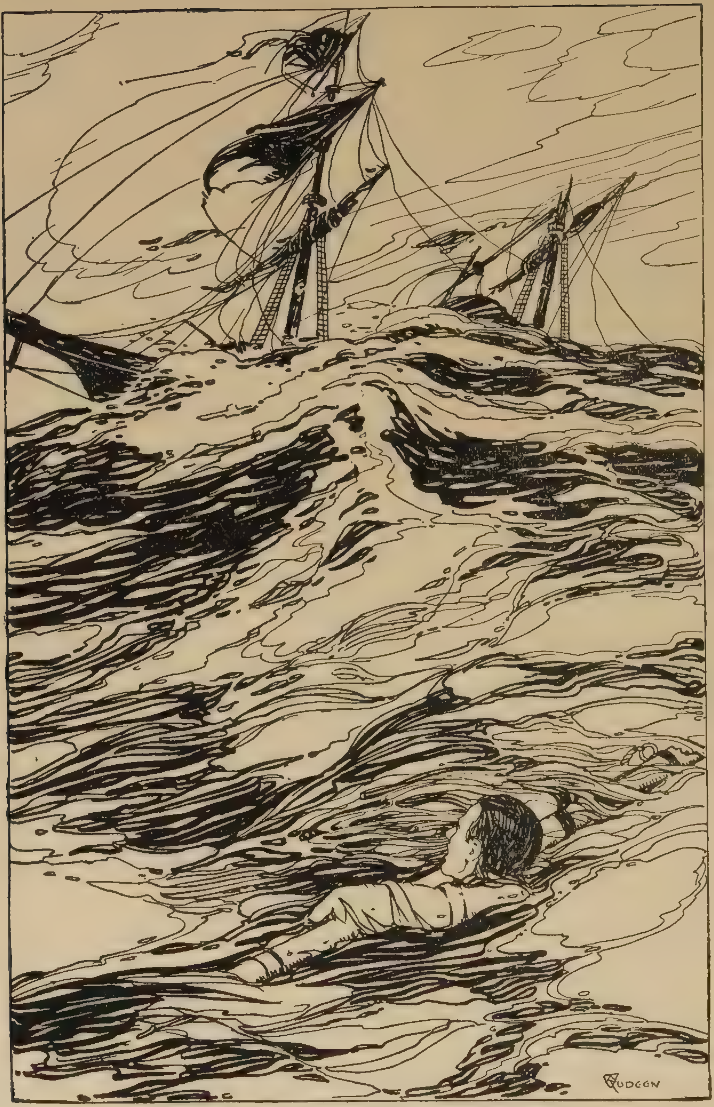
1. This selection is from *Kidnapped,* the story of a young man, David Balfour by name, who, by the treachery of an uncle who has usurped David's right to the family estate and fortune, is taken by force on board a brig bound for the Carolinas in North America. In the Carolinas, according to the compact made between David's uncle and the captain of the brig, David is to be sold. He is saved from this fate by the sinking of the brig. The selection as here given begins at the point where David is washed from the deck into the sea. The Island of Earraid is a small, unimportant island off the coast of Scotland.



I FOUND I WAS HOLDING TO A SPAR

While I was hailing the brig, I spied a tract of water lying between us, where no great waves came, but which yet boiled white all over and bristled in the moon with rings and bubbles. Sometimes the whole tract swung to one side, like the tail of a live serpent; sometimes, for a glimpse, it would all disappear and then boil up again. What it was I had no guess, which for the time increased my fear of it; but I now know it must have been the roost or tide-race, which had carried me away so fast and tumbled me about so cruelly, and at last, as if tired of that play, had flung out me and the spare yard upon its landward margin.

I now lay quite becalmed, and began to feel that a man can die of cold as well as of drowning. The shores of Earraid were close in; I could see in the moonlight the dots of heather and the sparkling of the mica in the rocks.

"Well," thought I to myself, "if I cannot get as far as that, it's strange."

I had no skill of swimming; but when I laid hold upon the yard with both arms, and kicked out with both feet, I soon began to find that I was moving. Hard work it was, and mortally slow; but in about an hour of kicking and splashing, I had got well in between the points of a sandy bay surrounded by low hills.

The sea was here quite quiet; there was no sound of any surf; the moon shone clear, and I thought in my heart I had never seen a place so desert and desolate. But it was dry land; and when at last it grew so shallow that I could leave the yard and wade ashore upon my feet, I cannot tell if I was more tired or more grateful. Both at least, I was; tired as I never was before that night; and grateful to God, as I trust I have been often, though never with more cause.

With my stepping ashore, I began the most unhappy part of my adventures. It was half-past twelve in the morning, and though the wind was broken by the land, it was a cold night. I dared not sit down (for I thought I should have frozen), but took off my shoes and walked to and fro upon the sand, barefoot and beating my breast with infinite weariness. There was no sound of man or cattle; not a cock crew, though it was about the hour of their first waking; only the surf broke outside in the distance, which put me in mind of my perils. To walk by the sea at that hour of the morning, and in a place so desert-like and lonesome, struck me with a kind of fear.

As soon as the day began to break, I put on my shoes and climbed a hill—the ruggedest scramble I ever undertook—falling, the whole way between big blocks of granite or leaping from one to another. When I got to the top the dawn was come. There was no sign of the brig, which must have been lifted from the reef and sunk. The boat, too, was nowhere to be seen. There was never a sail upon the ocean; and in what I could see of the land, was neither house nor man.

I was afraid to think what had befallen my shipmates, and afraid to look longer at so empty a scene. What with my wet clothes and weariness, and my belly that now began to ache with hunger, I had enough to trouble me without that. So I set off eastward along the south coast, hoping to find a house where I might warm myself, and perhaps get news of those I had lost. And at the worst, I considered the sun would soon rise and dry my clothes.

After a little, my way was stopped by a creek or inlet of the sea, which seemed to run pretty deep into the land; and as I had no means to get across, I must needs change my direction to go about the end of it. It was still the roughest kind of walking; indeed the whole, not only of Earraid, but of the neighboring part of Mull (which they call the Ross) is nothing but a jumble of granite rocks with heather in among. At first the creek kept narrowing as I had looked to see; but presently to my surprise it began to widen out again. At this I scratched my head, but had still no notion of the truth; until at last I came to a rising ground, and it burst upon me all in a moment that I was cast upon a little, barren isle, and cut off on every side by the salt seas.

Instead of the sun rising to dry me, it came on to rain, with a thick mist; so that my case was lamentable.

I stood in the rain, and shivered, and wondered what to do, till it occurred to me that perhaps the creek was fordable. Back I went to the narrowest point, and waded in. But not three yards from shore, I plunged in head over ears; and if ever I was heard of more it was rather by God's grace than my own prudence. I was no wetter (for that could hardly be), but I was all the colder for this mishap; and having lost another hope, was the more unhappy.

And now, all at once, the yard came in my head. What had carried me through the roost, would surely serve to cross this little quiet creek in safety. With that I set off, undaunted, across the top of the isle, to fetch and carry it back. It was a weary tramp in all ways, and if hope had not buoyed me up, I must have cast myself down and given up. Whether with the sea salt, or because I was growing fevered, I was distressed with thirst, and had to stop, as I went, and drink the peaty water out of the hags.

I came to the bay at last, more dead than alive; and at the first glance, I thought the yard was something further out than when I left it. In I went, for the third time, into the sea. The sand was smooth and firm and shelved gradually down; so that I could wade out till the water was almost to my neck and the little waves splashed into my face. But at that depth my feet began to leave me and I durst venture no farther. As for the yard, I saw it bobbing very quietly some twenty feet in front of me.

I had borne up well until this last disappointment; but at that I came ashore, and flung myself down upon the sands and wept.

The time I spent upon the island is still so horrible a thought to me, that I must pass it lightly over. In all the books I have read of people cast away, they had either their pockets full of tools, or a chest of things would be thrown upon the beach along with them, as if on purpose. My case was very different. I had nothing in my pockets but money; and being inland bred, I was as much short of knowledge as of means.

I knew indeed that shell-fish were counted good to eat; and among the rocks of the isle I found a great plenty of limpets, which at first I could scarcely strike from their places, not knowing quickness to be needful. There were, besides, some of the little shells that we call buckies; I think periwinkle is the English name. Of these two I made my whole diet, devouring them cold and raw as I found them; and so hungry was I, that at first they seemed to me delicious.

Perhaps they were out of season, or perhaps there was something wrong in the sea about my island. But at least I had no sooner eaten my first meal than I was seized with giddiness and retching, and lay for a long time no better than dead. A second trial of the same food (indeed I had no other) did better with me and revived my strength. But as long as I was on the island, I never knew what to expect when I had eaten; sometimes all was well, and sometimes I was thrown into a miserable sickness; nor could I ever distinguish what particular fish it was that hurt me.

All day it streamed rain; the island ran like a sop, there was no dry spot to be found; and when I lay down that night, between two boulders that made a kind of roof, my feet were in a bog.

The second day, I crossed the island to all sides. There was no one part of it better than another; it was all desolate and rocky; nothing living on it but game birds which I lacked the means to kill, and the gulls which haunted the outlying rocks in a prodigious number. But the creek, or straits, that cut off the isle from the main land of the Ross, opened out on the north into a bay, and the bay again opened into the Sound of Iona; and it was the neighborhood of this place that I chose to be my home; though if I had thought upon the very name of home in such a spot, I must have burst out crying.

I had good reasons for my choice. There was in this part of the isle a little hut of a house like a pig's hut, where fishers used to sleep when they came there upon their business; but the turf roof of it had fallen entirely in; so that the hut was of no use to me, and gave me less shelter than my rocks. What was more important, the shell-fish on which I lived grew there in great plenty; when the tide was out I could gather a peck at a time: and this was doubtless a convenience. But the other reason went deeper. I had become in no way used to the horrid solitude of the isle, but still looked round me on all sides (like a man that was hunted) between fear and hope that I might see some human creature coming. Now, from a little up the hillside over the bay, I could catch a sight of the great, ancient church and the roofs of the people's houses in Iona. And on the other hand, over the low country of the Ross, I saw smoke go up, morning and evening, as if from a homestead in a hollow of the land.

I used to watch this smoke, when I was wet and cold, and had my head half turned with loneliness; and think of the fireside and the company, till my heart burned. It was the same with the roofs of Iona. Altogether, this sight I had of men's homes and comfortable lives, although it put a point on my own sufferings, yet it kept hope alive, and helped me to eat my raw shell-fish (which had soon grown to be a disgust) and saved me from the sense of horror I had whenever I was quite alone with dead rocks, and fowls, and the rain, and the cold sea.

I say it kept hope alive; and indeed it seemed impossible that I should be left to die on the shores of my own country, and within view of a church tower and the smoke of men's houses. But the second day passed; and though as long as the light lasted I kept a bright lookout for boats on the sound or men passing on the Ross, no help came near me. It still rained; and I turned in to sleep, as wet as ever and with a cruel sore throat, but a little comforted, perhaps, by having said good-night to my next neighbors, the people of Iona.

Charles the Second declared a man could stay out doors more days in the year in the climate of England than in any other. This was very like a king with a palace at his back and changes of dry clothes. But he must have had better luck than I had on that miserable isle. It was the height of the summer; yet it rained for more than twenty-four hours, and did not clear until the afternoon of the third day.

This was the day of incidents. In the morning I saw a red deer, a buck with a fine spread of antlers, standing in the rain on the top of the island; but he had scarce seen me rise from under my rock, before he trotted off upon the other side. I supposed he must have swum the straits; though what should bring any creature to Earraid, was more than I could fancy.

A little later, as I was jumping about after my limpets, I was startled by a guinea piece, which fell upon a rock in front of me and glanced off into the sea. When the sailors gave me my money again, they kept back not only about a third of the whole sum, but my father's leather purse; so that from that day out, I carried my gold loose in a pocket with a button. I now saw there must be a hole, and clapped my hand to the place in a great hurry. But this was to lock the stable door after the steed was stolen. I had left the shore at Queensferry with near on fifty pounds; now I found no more than two guinea pieces and a silver shilling.

It is true I picked up a third guinea a little after, where it lay shining on a piece of turf. That made a fortune of three pounds and four shillings, English money, for a lad, the rightful heir of an estate, and now starving on an isle at the extreme end of the wild Highlands.

This state of my affairs dashed me still further; and indeed my plight on that third morning was truly pitiful. My clothes were beginning to rot; my stockings in particular were quite worn through, so that my shanks went naked; my hands had grown quite soft with the continual soaking; my throat was very sore, my strength had much abated, and my heart so turned against the horrid stuff I was condemned to eat, that the very sight of it came near to sicken me.

And yet the worst was not yet come.

There is a pretty high rock on the northwest of Earraid, which (because it had a flat top and overlooked the sound) I was much in the habit of frequenting; not that ever I stayed in one place, save when asleep, my misery giving me no rest. Indeed, I wore myself down with continual and aimless goings and comings in the rain.

As soon, however, as the sun came out, I lay down on the top of that rock to dry myself. The comfort of the sunshine is a thing I cannot tell. It set me thinking hopefully of my deliverance, of which I had begun to despair; and I scanned the sea and the Ross with a fresh interest.

On the south of my rock, a part of the island jutted out and hid the open ocean, so that a boat could thus come quite near me upon that side, and I be none the wiser.

Well, all of a sudden, a coble[2] with a brown sail and a pair of fishers aboard of it, came flying round that corner of the isle, bound for Iona. I shouted out, and then fell on my knees on the rock and reached up my hands and prayed to them. They were near enough to hear—I could even see the color of their hair; and there was no doubt but they observed me, for they cried out in the Gaelic tongue and laughed. But the boat never turned aside, and flew on, right before my eyes, for Iona.

I could not believe such wickedness, and ran along the shore from rock to rock, crying on them piteously; even after they were out of reach of my voice, I still cried and waved to them; and when they were quite gone, I thought my heart would have burst. All the time of my troubles, I wept only twice. Once, when I could not reach the oar; and now, the second time, when these fishers turned a deaf ear to my cries. But this time I wept and roared like a wicked child, tearing up the turf with my nails and grinding my face in the earth. If a wish would kill men, those two fishers would never have seen morning; and I should likely have died upon my island.

When I was a little over my anger, I must eat again, but with such loathing of the mess as I could now scarcely control. Sure enough, I should have done as well to fast, for my fishes poisoned me again. I had all my first pains; my throat was so sore I could scarce swallow; I had a fit of strong shuddering, which clucked my teeth together; and there came on me that dreadful sense of illness, which we have no name for either in Scotch or English. I thought I should have died, and made my peace with God, forgiving all men, even my uncle and the fishers; and as soon as I had thus made up my mind to the worst, clearness came upon me: I observed the night was falling dry; my clothes were dried a good deal; truly, I was in a better case than ever before since I had landed on the isle; and so I got to sleep at last, with a thought of gratitude.

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[2] A coble is a small boat used in fishing.

The next day (which was the fourth of this horrible life of mine) I found my bodily strength run very low. But the sun shone, the air was sweet, and what I managed to eat of the shell-fish agreed well with me and revived my courage.

I was scarce back on my rock (where I went always the first thing after I had eaten) before I observed a boat coming down the sound and with her head, as I thought, in my direction.

I began at once to hope and fear exceedingly; for I thought these men might have thought better of their cruelty and be coming back to my assistance. But another disappointment such as yesterday's was more than I could bear. I turned my back, accordingly, upon the sea, and did not look again till I had counted many hundreds. The boat was still heading for the island. The next time I counted the full thousand, as slowly as I could, my heart beating so as to hurt me. And then it was out of all question. She was coming straight to Earraid!

I could no longer hold myself back, but ran to the seaside and out, from one rock to another, as far as I could go. It is a marvel I was not drowned; for when I was brought to a stand at last, my legs shook under me, and my mouth was so dry, I must wet it with the sea water before I was able to shout.

All this time the boat was coming on; and now I was able to perceive it was the same boat and the same two men as yesterday. This I knew by their hair, which the one had of a bright yellow and the other black. But now there was a third man along with them, who looked to be of a better class.

As soon as they were come within easy speech, they let down their sail and lay quiet. In spite of my supplications, they drew no nearer in, and what frightened me most of all, the new man tee-hee'd with laughter as he talked and looked at me.

Then he stood up in the boat and addressed me a long while, speaking fast and with many wavings of his hand. I told him I had no Gaelic; and at this he became very angry, and I began to suspect he thought he was talking English. Listening very close, I caught the word, "whateffer," several times; but all the rest was Gaelic, and might have been Greek and Hebrew for me.

"Whateffer," said I, to show him I had caught a word.

"Yes, yes—yes, yes," says he, and then he looked at the other men, as much as to say, "I told you I spoke English," and began again as hard as ever in the Gaelic.

This time I picked out another word, "tide." Then I had a flash of hope. I remembered he was always waving his hand toward the mainland of the Ross.

"Do you mean when the tide is out——?" I cried, and could not finish.

"Yes, yes," said he. "Tide."

At that I turned tail upon their boat (where my adviser had once more begun to tee-hee with laughter), leaped back the way I had come, from one stone to another, and set off running across the isle as I had never run before. In about half an hour I came out upon the shores of the creek; and, sure enough, it was shrunk into a little trickle of water, through which I dashed, not above my knees, and landed with a shout on the main island.

A sea-bred boy would not have stayed a day on Earraid; which is only what they call a tidal islet; and except in the bottom of the neaps, can be entered and left twice in every twenty-four hours, either dry-shod, or at the most by wading. Even I, who had the tide going out and in before me in the bay, and even watched for the ebbs, the better to get my shell-fish—even I (I say), if I had sat down to think, instead of raging at my fate, must have soon guessed the secret and got free. It was no wonder the fishers had not understood me. The wonder was rather that they had ever guessed my pitiful illusion, and taken the trouble to come back. I had starved with cold and hunger on that island for close upon one hundred hours. But for the fishers, I might have left my bones there, in pure folly.

And even as it was, I had paid for it pretty dear, not only in past sufferings, but in my present case; being clothed like a beggar-man, scarce able to walk, and in great pain of my sore throat.

I have seen wicked men and fools, a great many of both; and I believe they both get paid in the end; but the fools first.

ELEPHANT HUNTING

By Roualeyn Gordon Cumming

Note.—Mr. Cumming, a native of Scotland, was always passionately fond of hunting. Even in boyhood he devoted most of his time to sports of the field, and showed a great fondness for all forms of natural history.

For a time he served in the English army in India, and hunted the big game of those regions. However, he was not satisfied with this, and after a visit to Newfoundland, which was more disappointing to him, he went to Africa and there spent five adventurous years hunting and exploring.

Throughout this time he kept a journal of his exploits and adventures, and it is from this journal that he wrote his *A Hunter's Life Among Lions, Elephants and Other Wild Animals of South Africa*, from which the following selection is taken. We may judge from his account that he did not find Africa as disappointing as India and Newfoundland had proved.

His style is not that of a literary man, but he has the happy faculty of presenting things in a very vivid manner, so that we are willing to make some allowance for faults in style. He was conscious of his weakness in this matter, and partially explained it by saying, "The hand, wearied all day with the grasping of a rifle, is not the best suited for wielding the pen."

ON the 25th, at dawn of day, we inspanned, and trekked about five hours in a northeasterly course, through a boundless open country sparingly adorned with dwarfish old trees. In the distance the long-sought mountains of Bamangwato at length loomed blue before me. We halted beside a glorious fountain, which at once made me forget all the cares and difficulties I had encountered in reaching it. The name of this fountain was Massouey, but I at once christened it "the Elephant's own Fountain." This was a very remarkable spot on the southern borders of endless elephant forests, at which I had at length arrived. The fountain was deep and strong, situated in a hollow at the eastern extremity of an extensive vley,[1] and its margin was surrounded by a level stratum of solid old red sandstone. Here and there lay a thick layer of soil upon the rock, and this was packed flat with the fresh spoor of elephants. Around the water's edge the very rock was worn down by the gigantic feet which for ages had trodden there.

The soil of the surrounding country was white and yellow sand, but grass, trees, and bushes were abundant. From the borders of the fountain a hundred well-trodden elephant foot-paths led away in every direction, like the radii of a circle. The breadth of these paths was about three feet; those leading to the northward and east were the most frequented, the country in those directions being well wooded. We drew up the wagons on a hillock on the eastern side of the water. This position commanded a good view of any game that might approach to drink. I had just cooked my breakfast, and commenced to feed, when I heard my men exclaim, "Almagtig keek de ghroote clomp cameel;" and, raising my eyes from the sassaby[2] stew, I beheld a truly beautiful and very unusual scene.

[1] A vley is a swamp or morass.

[2] The sassaby is a large African antelope, resembling the hartbeest, but having regularly curved horns.

From the margin of the fountain there extended an open level vley, without a tree or bush, that stretched away about a mile to the northward, where it was bounded by extensive groves of wide-spreading mimosas. Up the middle of the vley stalked a troop of ten colossal giraffes, flanked by two large herds of blue wildebeests and zebras, with an advanced guard of pallahs. They were all coming to the fountain to drink, and would be within rifle-shot of the wagons before I could finish my breakfast. I, however, continued to swallow my food with the utmost expedition, having directed my men to catch and saddle Colesberg. In a few minutes the giraffes were slowly advancing within two hundred yards, stretching their graceful necks, and gazing in wonder at the unwonted wagons.

Grasping my rifle, I now mounted Colesberg, and rode slowly toward them. They continued gazing at the wagons until I was within one hundred yards of them, when, whisking their long tails over their rumps, they made off at an easy canter. As I pressed upon them they increased their pace; but Colesberg had much the speed of them, and before we proceeded half a mile I was riding by the shoulder of the dark-chestnut old bull, whose head towered high above the rest. Letting fly at the gallop, I wounded him behind the shoulder; soon after which I broke him from the herd, and presently, going ahead of him, he came to a stand. I then gave him a second bullet, somewhere near the first. These two shots had taken effect, and he was now in my power, but I would not lay him low so far from camp; so, having waited until he had regained his breath, I drove him half way back toward the wagons. Here he became obstreperous; so, loading one barrel, and pointing my rifle toward the clouds, I shot him in the throat, when, rearing high, he fell backward and expired.

This was a magnificent specimen of the giraffe, measuring upward of eighteen feet in height. I stood for nearly half an hour engrossed in the contemplation of his extreme beauty and gigantic proportions; and, if there had been no elephants, I could have exclaimed, like Duke Alexander of Gordon when he killed the famous old stag with seventeen tine, "Now I can die happy." But I longed for an encounter with the noble elephants, and I thought little more of the giraffe than if I had killed a gemsbok or an eland.

In the afternoon I removed my wagons to a correct distance from the fountain, and drew them up among some bushes about four hundred yards to leeward of the water. In the evening I was employed in manufacturing hardened bullets for the elephants, using a composition of one of pewter to four of lead; and I had just completed my work, when we heard a troop of elephants splashing and trumpeting in the water. This was to me a joyful sound; I slept little that night.

On the 26th I arose at earliest dawn, and, having fed four of my horses, proceeded with Isaac to the fountain to examine the spoor of the elephants which had drunk there during the night. A number of the paths contained fresh spoor of elephants of all sizes, which had gone from the fountain in different directions. We reckoned that at least thirty of these gigantic quadrupeds had visited the water during the night.

We hastily returned to camp, where, having breakfasted, I saddled up, and proceeded to take up the spoor of the largest bull elephant, accompanied by after-riders and three of the guides to assist in spooring. I was also accompanied by my dogs. Having selected the spoor of a mighty bull, the Bechuanas went ahead and I followed them. It was extremely interesting and exciting work. The footprint of this elephant was about two feet in diameter, and was beautifully visible in the soft sand. The spoor at first led us for about three miles in an easterly direction, along one of the sandy foot-paths, without a check. We then entered a very thick forest, and the elephant had gone a little out of the path to smash some trees, and to plow up the earth with his tusks. He soon, however, again took the path, and held along it for several miles.

We were on rather elevated ground, with a fine view of a part of the Bamangwato chain of mountains before us. Here the trees were large and handsome, but not strong enough to resist the inconceivable strength of the mighty monarchs of these forests. Almost every tree had half its branches broken short by them, and at every hundred yards I came upon entire trees, and these the largest in the forest, uprooted clean out of the ground, or broken short across their stems. I observed several large trees placed in an inverted position, having their roots uppermost in the air. Our friend had here halted, and fed for a long time upon a large, wide-spreading tree, which he had broken short across within a few feet of the ground. After following the spoor some distance further through the dense mazes of the forest, we got into ground so thickly trodden by elephants that we were baffled in our endeavors to trace the spoor any further; and after wasting several hours in attempting by casts to take up the proper spoor, we gave it up, and with a sorrowful heart I turned my horse's head toward camp.

Having reached the wagons, while drinking my coffee I reviewed the whole day's work, and felt much regret at my want of luck in my first day's elephant hunting, and I resolved that night to watch the water, and try what could be done with elephants by night shooting. I accordingly ordered the usual watching-hole to be constructed, and, having placed my bedding in it, repaired thither shortly after sundown. I had lain about two hours in the hole, when I heard a low rumbling noise like distant thunder, caused (as the Bechuanas affirmed) by the bowels of the elephants which were approaching the fountain. I lay on my back, with my mouth open, attentively listening, and could hear them plowing up the earth with their tusks. Presently they walked up to the water, and commenced drinking within fifty yards of me.

They approached with so quiet a step that I fancied it was the footsteps of jackals which I had heard, and I was not aware of their presence until I heard the water, which they had drawn up in their trunks and were pouring into their mouths, dropping into the fountain. I then peeped from my sconce with a beating heart, and beheld two enormous bull elephants, which looked like two great castles, standing before me. I could not see very distinctly, for there was only starlight. Having lain on my breast some time taking my aim, I let fly at one of the elephants, using the Dutch rifle carrying six to the pound. The ball told loudly on his shoulder, and, uttering a loud cry, he stumbled through the fountain, when both made off in different directions.

All night large herds of zebras and blue wildebeests capered around me, coming sometimes within a few yards. Several parties of rhinoceroses also made their appearance. I felt a little apprehensive that lions might visit the fountain, and every time that hyaenas or jackals lapped the water I looked forth, but no lions appeared. At length I fell into a sound sleep, nor did I awake until the bright star of morn had shot far above the eastern horizon.

Before proceeding further with my narrative, it may here be interesting to make a few remarks on the African elephant and his habits. The elephant is widely diffused through the vast forests, and is met with in herds of various numbers. The male is very much larger than the female, consequently much more difficult to kill. He is provided with two enormous tusks. These are long, tapering, and beautifully arched; their length averages from six to eight feet, and they weigh from sixty to a hundred pounds each. In the vicinity of the equator the elephants attain to a greater size than to the southward; and I am in the possession of a pair of tusks of the African bull elephant, the larger of which measures ten feet nine inches in length, and weighs one hundred and seventy-three pounds. The females, unlike Asiatic elephants in this respect, are likewise provided with tusks. Old bull elephants are found singly or in pairs, or consorting together in small herds, varying from six to twenty individuals. The younger bulls remain for many years in the company of their mothers, and these are met together in large herds of from twenty to a hundred individuals. The food of the elephant consists of the branches, leaves, and roots of trees, and also of a variety of bulbs, of the situation of which he is advised by his exquisite sense of smell. To obtain these he turns up the ground with his tusks, and whole acres may be seen thus plowed up. Elephants consume an immense quantity of food, and pass the greater part of the day and night in feeding. Like the whale in the ocean, the elephant on land is acquainted with, and roams over, wide and extensive tracts. He is extremely particular in always frequenting the freshest and most verdant districts of the forest; and when one district is parched and barren, he will forsake it for years, and wander to great distances in quest of better pasture.

The elephant entertains an extraordinary horror of man, and a child can put a hundred of them to flight by passing at a quarter of a mile to windward; and when thus disturbed, they go a long way before they halt. It is surprising how soon these sagacious animals are aware of the presence of a hunter in their domains. When one troop has been attacked, all the other elephants frequenting the district are aware of the fact within two or three days, when they all forsake it, and migrate to distant parts, leaving the hunter no alternative but to inspan his wagons, and remove to fresh ground. This constitutes one of the greatest difficulties which a skilful elephant-hunter encounters. Even in the most remote parts, which may be reckoned the headquarters of the elephant, it is only occasionally, and with inconceivable toil and hardship, that the eye of the hunter is cheered by the sight of one. Owing to habits peculiar to himself, the elephant is more inaccessible, and much more rarely seen, than any other game quadruped, excepting certain rare antelopes. They choose for their resort the most lonely and secluded depths of the forest, generally at a very great distance from the rivers and fountains at which they drink. In dry and warm weather they visit these waters nightly, but in cool and cloudy weather they drink only once every third or fourth day. About sundown the elephant leaves his distant midday haunt, and commences his march toward the fountain, which is probably from twelve to twenty miles distant. This he generally reaches between the hours of nine and midnight, when, having slaked his thirst and cooled his body by spouting large volumes of water over his back with his trunk, he resumes the path to his forest solitudes. Having reached a secluded spot, I have remarked that full-grown bulls lie down on their broad-sides, about the hour of midnight, and sleep for a few hours. The spot which they usually select is an ant-hill, and they lie around it with their backs resting against it; these hills, formed by the white ants, are from thirty to forty feet in diameter at their base. The mark of the under tusk is always deeply imprinted in the ground, proving that they lie upon their sides. I never remarked that females had thus lain down, and it is only in the more secluded districts that the bulls adopt this practice; for I observed that, in districts where the elephants were liable to frequent disturbance, they took repose standing on their legs beneath some shady tree.

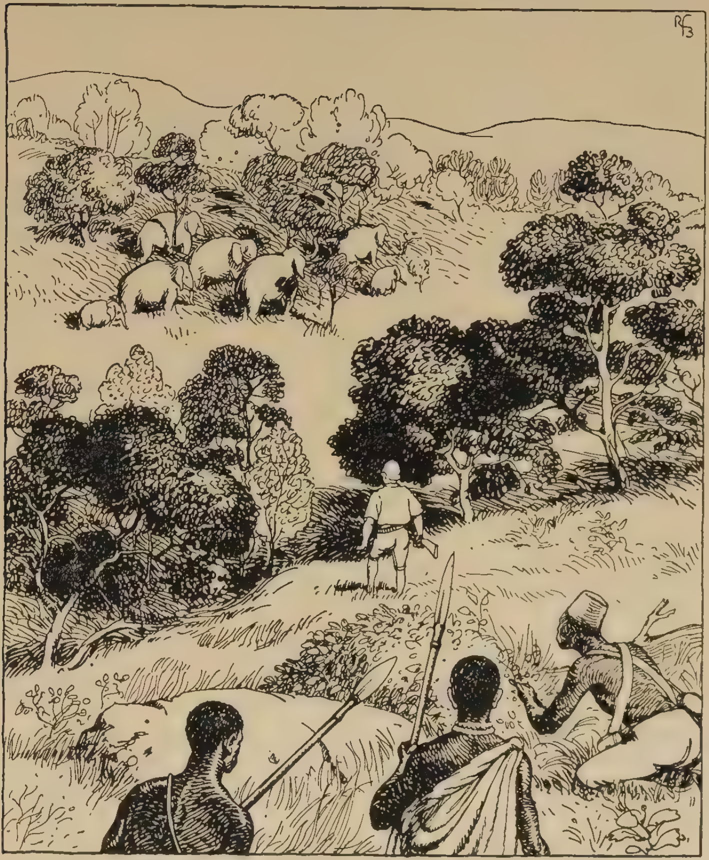
Having slept, they then proceed to feed extensively. Spreading out from one another, and proceeding in a zigzag course, they smash and destroy all the finest trees in the forest which happen to lie in their course. The number of goodly trees which a herd of bull elephants will thus destroy is utterly incredible. They are extremely capricious, and on coming to a group of five or six trees, they break down not unfrequently the whole of them, when, having perhaps only tasted one or two small branches, they pass on and continue their wanton work of destruction. I have repeatedly ridden through forests where the trees thus broken lay so thick across one another that it was almost impossible to ride through the district, and it is in situations such as these that attacking the elephant is attended with most danger. During the night they will feed in open plains and thinly-wooded districts, but as day dawns they retire to the densest covers within reach, which nine times in ten are composed of the impracticable wait-a-bit thorns, and here they remain drawn up in a compact herd during the heat of the day. In remote districts, however, and in cool weather, I have known herds to continue pasturing throughout the whole day.

The appearance of the wild elephant is inconceivably majestic and imposing. His gigantic height and colossal bulk, so greatly surpassing all other quadrupeds, combined with his sagacious disposition and peculiar habits, impart to him an interest in the eyes of the hunter which no other animal can call forth. The pace of the elephant, when undisturbed, is a bold, free, sweeping step; and from the peculiar spongy formation of his foot, his tread is extremely light and inaudible, and all his movements are attended with a peculiar gentleness and grace. This, however, only applies to the elephant when roaming undisturbed in his jungle; for, when roused by the hunter, he proves the most dangerous enemy, and far more difficult to conquer than any other beast of the chase.

On the 27th, as day dawned, I left my shooting-hole, and proceeded to inspect the spoor of my wounded elephant. After following it for some distance I came to an abrupt hillock, and fancying that from the summit a good view might be obtained of the surrounding country, I left my followers to seek the spoor while I ascended. I did not raise my eyes from the ground until I had reached the highest pinnacle of rock. I then looked east, and, to my inexpressible gratification, beheld a troop of nine or ten elephants quietly browsing within a quarter of a mile of me. I allowed myself only one glance at them, and then rushed down to warn my followers to be silent. A council of war was hastily held, the result of which was my ordering Isaac to ride hard to camp, with instructions to return as quickly as possible, accompanied by Kleinboy, and to bring me my dogs, the large Dutch rifle, and a fresh horse. I once more ascended the hillock to feast my eyes upon the enchanting sight before me, and, drawing out my spy-glass, narrowly watched the motions of the elephants. The herd consisted entirely of females, several of which were followed by small calves.

Presently on reconnoitering the surrounding country, I discovered a second herd, consisting of five bull elephants, which were quietly feeding about a mile to the northward. The cows were feeding toward a rocky ridge that stretched away from the base of the hillock on which I stood. Burning with impatience to commence the attack, I resolved to try the stalking system with these, and to hunt the troop of bulls with dogs and horses. Having thus decided, I directed the guides to watch the elephants from the summit of the hillock, and with a beating heart I approached them. The ground and wind favoring me, I soon gained the rocky ridge toward which they were feeding. They were now within one hundred yards, and I resolved to enjoy the pleasure of watching their movements for a little before I fired. They continued to feed slowly toward me, breaking the branches from the trees with their trunks, and eating the leaves and tender shoots. I soon selected the finest in the herd, and kept my eye on her in particular. At length two of the troop had walked slowly past at about sixty yards, and the one which I had selected was feeding with two others, on a thorny tree before me.

My hand was now as steady as the rock on which it rested; so, taking a deliberate aim, I let fly at her head a little behind the eye. She got it hard and sharp, just where I aimed, but it did not seem to affect her much. Uttering a loud cry, she wheeled about, when I gave her the second ball close behind the shoulder. All the elephants uttered a strange rumbling noise, and made off in a line to the northward at a brisk, ambling pace, their huge, fan-like ears flapping in the ratio of their speed. I did not wait to load, but ran back to the hillock to obtain a view. On gaining its summit the guides pointed out the elephants; they were standing in a grove of shady trees, but the wounded one was some distance behind with another elephant, doubtless its particular friend, who was endeavoring to assist it.



WITH BEATING HEART I APPROACHED A VIEW

These elephants had probably never before heard the report of a gun, and, having neither seen nor smelt me, they were unaware of the presence of man, and did not seem inclined to go any further.

Presently my men hove in sight, bringing the dogs and when these came up, I waited some time before commencing the attack, that the dogs and horses might recover their wind. We then rode slowly toward the elephants, and had advanced within two hundred yards of them, when, the ground being open, they observed us, and made off in an easterly direction; but the wounded one immediately dropped astern, and the next moment was surrounded by the dogs, which, barking angrily, seemed to engross her attention.

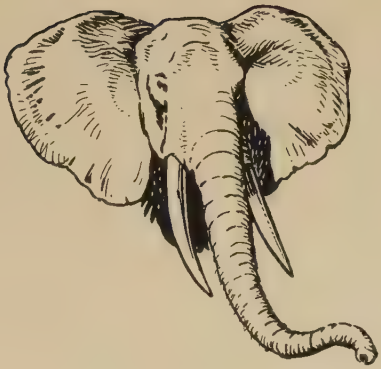
Having placed myself between her and the retreating troop, I dismounted to fire within forty yards of her, in open ground. Colesberg was extremely afraid of the elephants, and gave me much trouble, jerking my arm when I tried to fire. At length I let fly; but, on endeavoring to regain my saddle, Colesberg declined to allow me to mount; and when I tried to lead him, and run for it, he only backed toward the wounded elephant. At this moment I heard another elephant close behind; and on looking about, I beheld the "friend," with uplifted trunk, charging down upon me at top speed, shrilly trumpeting, and following an old black pointer name Schwart, that was perfectly deaf, and trotted along before the enraged elephant quite unaware of what was behind him. I felt certain that she would have either me or my horse. I, however, determined not to relinquish my steed, but to hold on by the bridle. My men, who of course kept at a safe distance, stood aghast with their mouths open, and for a few seconds my position was certainly not an enviable one. Fortunately, however, the dogs took off the attention of the elephants; and just as they were upon me, I managed to spring into the saddle, where I was safe. As I turned my back to mount, the elephants were so very near that I really expected to feel one of their trunks lay hold of me. I rode up to Kleinboy for my double-barreled two-grooved rifle; he and Isaac were pale and almost speechless with fright. Returning to the charge, I was soon once more alongside, and, firing from the saddle, I sent another brace of bullets into the wounded elephant. Colesberg was extremely unsteady, and destroyed the correctness of my aim.

The friend now seemed resolved to do some mischief, and charged me furiously, pursuing me to a distance of several hundred yards. I therefore deemed it proper to give her a gentle hint to act less officiously, and, accordingly, having loaded, I approached within thirty yards, and gave it her sharp, right and left, behind the shoulder, upon which she at once made off with drooping trunk, evidently with a mortal wound. I never recur to this my first day's elephant shooting without regretting my folly in contenting myself with securing only one elephant. The first was now dying, and could not leave the ground, and the second was also mortally wounded, and I had only to follow and finish her; but I foolishly allowed her to escape, while I amused myself with the first, which kept walking backward, and standing by every tree she passed. Two more shots finished her: on receiving them, she tossed her trunk up and down two or three times, and, falling on her broadside against a thorny tree, which yielded like grass, before her enormous weight, she uttered a deep, hoarse cry and expired. This was a very handsome old cow elephant, and was decidedly the best in the troop. She was in excellent condition, and carried a pair of long and perfect tusks.

I was in high spirits at my success, and felt so perfectly satisfied with having killed one, that, although it was still early in the day, and my horses were fresh, I allowed the troop of five bulls to remain unmolested, foolishly trusting to fall in with them next day. How little did I then know of the habits of elephants, or the rules to be adopted in hunting them, or deem it probable I should never see them more!

Having knee-haltered our horses, we set to work with our knives and assagais to prepare the skull for the hatchet, in order to cut out the tusks, nearly half the length of which, I may mention, is imbedded in bone sockets in the fore part of the skull. To cut out the tusks of a cow elephant requires barely one-fifth of the labor requisite to cut out those of a bull; and when the sun went down, we had managed by our combined efforts to cut out one of the tusks of my first elephant, with which we triumphantly returned to camp, having left the guides in charge of the carcass, where they volunteered to take up their quarters for the night. On reaching my wagons I found Johannus and Carollus in a happy state of indifference to all passing events: they were both very drunk, having broken into my wine-cask and spirit-case.

On the 28th I arose at an early hour, and, burning with anxiety to look forth once more from the summit of the hillock which the day before brought me such luck, I made a hasty breakfast, and rode thither with after-riders and my dogs. But, alas! I had allowed the golden opportunity to slip. This day I sought in vain; and although I often again ascended to the summit of my favorite hillock in that and in the succeeding year, my eyes were destined never again to hail from it a troop of elephants.



SOME CLEVER MONKEYS*

By Thomas Belt

ON the dryer ridges near the Artigua River, a valuable timber tree, the "nispera," as it is called by the native, is common. It grows to a great size, and its timber is almost indestructible; so that we used it in the construction of all our permanent works. White ants do not eat it, nor, excepting when first cut, and before it is barked, do any of the wood-boring beetles. It bears a round fruit about the size of an apple, hard and heavy when green, and at this time is much frequented by the large yellowish-brown spider-monkey, which roams over the tops of the trees in bands of from ten to twenty. Sometimes they lay quiet until I was passing underneath, when, shaking a branch of the nispera tree, they would send down a shower of the hard round fruit; but fortunately I was never struck by them. As soon as I looked up, they would commence yelping and barking, and putting on the most threatening gestures, breaking off pieces of branches and letting them fall, and shaking off more fruit, but never throwing anything, simply letting it fall. Often, when on lower trees, they would hang from the branches two or three together, holding on to each other and to the branch with their fore feet and long tail, whilst their hind feet hung down, all the time making threatening gestures and cries.

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* This selection is taken from *The Naturalist in Nicaragua.*

Sometimes a female would be seen carrying a young one on its back, to which it clung with legs and tail, the mother making its way along the branches, and leaping from tree to tree, apparently but little encumbered with its baby. A large black and white eagle is said to prey upon them, but I never saw one, although I was constantly falling in with troops of the monkeys. Don Francisco Velasquez, one of our officers, told me that one day he heard a monkey crying out in the forest for more than two hours, and at last, going out to see what was the matter, he saw a monkey on a branch and an eagle beside it trying to frighten it to turn its back, when it would have seized it. The monkey, however, kept its face to its foe, and the eagle did not care to engage with it in this position, but probably would have tired it out. Velasquez fired at the eagle, and frightened it away. I think it likely, from what I have seen of the habits of this monkey, that they defend themselves from its attack by keeping two or three together, thus assisting each other, and that it is only when the eagle finds one separated from its companions that it dares to attack it.

Sometimes, but more rarely, a troop of the white-faced cebus monkey would be fallen in with, rapidly running away, throwing themselves from tree to tree. This monkey feeds also partly on fruit, but is incessantly on the look-out for insects, examining the crevices in trees and withered leaves, seizing the largest beetles and munching them up with the greatest relish. It is also very fond of eggs and young birds, and must play havoc among the nestlings. Probably owing to its carnivorous habits, its flesh is not considered so good by monkey eaters as that of the fruit-feeding spider-monkey.

It is a very intelligent and mischievous animal. I kept one for a long time as a pet, and was much amused with its antics. At first, I had it fastened with a light chain; but it managed to open the links and escape several times, and then made straight for the fowls' nests, breaking every egg it could get hold of. Generally, after being a day or two loose, it would allow itself to be caught again. I tried tying it up with a cord, and afterwards with a raw-hide thong, but had to nail the end, as it could loosen any knot in a few minutes. It would sometimes entangle itself around a pole to which it was fastened, and then unwind the coils again with the greatest discernment. Its chain allowed it to swing down below the verandah, but it could not reach to the ground.

Sometimes, when there was a brood of young ducks about, it would hold out a piece of bread in one hand and, when it had tempted a duckling within reach, seize it by the other, and kill it with a bite in the breast. There was such an uproar amongst the fowls on these occasions, that we soon knew what was the matter, and would rush out and punish Mickey (as we called him) with a switch; so that he was ultimately cured of his poultry-killing propensities. One day, when whipping him, I held up the dead duckling in front of him, and at each blow of the light switch told him to take hold of it, and at last, much to my surprise, he did so, taking it and holding it tremblingly in one hand.

He would draw things towards him with a stick, and even use a swing for the same purpose. It had been put up for the children, and could be reached by Mickey, who now and then indulged himself with a swing on it. One day, I had put down some bird skins on a chair to dry, far beyond, as I thought, Mickey's reach; but, fertile in expedients, he took the swing and launched it towards the chair, and

A CEBUS MONKEY

actually managed to knock the skins off in the return of the swing, so as to bring them within his reach. He also procured some jelly that was set out to cool in the same way. Mickey's actions were very human like. When any one came near to fondle him, he never neglected the opportunity of pocket-picking. He would pull out letters, and quickly take them from their envelopes. Anything eatable disappeared into his mouth immediately. Once he abstracted a small bottle of turpentine from the pocket of our medical officer. He drew the cork, held it first to one nostril, then to the other, made a wry face, recorked it, and returned it to the doctor.

One day, when he got loose, he was detected carrying off the cream-jug from the table, holding it upright with both hands, and trying to move off on his hind limbs. He gave the jug up without spilling a drop, all the time making an apologetic chuckle he often used when found out in any mischief, and which always meant, "I know I have done wrong, but don't punish me; in fact, I did not mean to do it—it was accidental." Whenever, however, he saw he was going to be punished, he would change his tone to a shrill, threatening note, showing his teeth, and trying to intimidate. He had quite an extensive vocabulary of sounds, varying from a gruff bark to a shrill whistle; and we could tell by them, without seeing him, when it was he was hungry, eating, frightened, or menacing; doubtless, one of his own species would have understood various minor shades of intonation and expression that we, not entering into his feelings and wants, passed over as unintelligible.

POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC

Note.—In the time of Benjamin Franklin, almanacs were a very popular form of literature. Few of the poorer people could afford newspapers, but almost every one could afford an almanac once a year; and the anecdotes and scraps of information which these contained in addition to their regular contents, were read and re-read everywhere.

In 1732, Franklin began the publication of an almanac. For twenty-five years, under the assumed name of Richard Saunders, he issued it annually. He himself says of it:

"I endeavored to make it both entertaining and useful; and it accordingly came to be in such demand that I reaped considerable profit from it, vending annually nearly ten thousand. And observing that it was generally read, scarce any neighborhood in the province being without it, I considered it as a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people, who bought scarcely any other books; I therefore filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality as a means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want to act always honestly as, to use here one of the proverbs, it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.

"These proverbs, which contain the wisdom of many ages and nations, I assembled and formed into a connected discourse, prefixed to the almanac of 1757, as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction. The bringing all these scattered counsels thus into a focus enabled them to make greater impression. The piece, being universally approved, was copied in all the newspapers of the continent and reprinted in Britain on a broadside, to be stuck up in houses; two translations were made of it in French and great numbers bought by the clergy and gentry, to distribute gratis among their poor parishioners and tenants. In Pennsylvania, as it discouraged useless expense in foreign superfluities, some thought it had its share of influence in producing that growing plenty of money which was observable for several years after its publication."

The Preface for the Year 1757

COURTEOUS Reader: I have heard that nothing gives an author so great pleasure as to find his works respectfully quoted by other learned authors. This pleasure I have seldom enjoyed. For though I have been, if I may say it without vanity, an eminent author of almanacs annually now for a full quarter of a century, my brother authors in the same way, for what reason I know not, have ever been very sparing in their applauses, and no other author has taken the least notice of me; so that did not my writings produce me some solid pudding, the great deficiency of praise would have quite discouraged me.

I concluded at length that the people were the best judges of my merit, for they buy my works; and besides, in my rambles, where I am not personally known I have frequently heard one or other of my adages repeated, with *as Poor Richard says* at the end of it. This gave me some satisfaction, as it showed not only that my instructions were regarded, but discovered likewise some respect for my authority; and I own that to encourage the practice of remembering and repeating those sentences, I have sometimes quoted myself with great gravity.

Judge, then, how much I must have been gratified by an incident I am going to relate to you. I stopped my horse lately where a great number of people were collected at a vendue[1] of merchants' goods. The hour of sale not being come, they were conversing on the badness of the times; and one of the company called to a plain, clean old man with white locks, "Pray, Father Abraham, what think you of the times? Won't these heavy taxes quite ruin the country? How shall we ever be able to pay them? What would you advise us to do?" Father Abraham stood up and replied: "If you would have my advice, I will give it you in short; for, 'a word to the wise is enough,'[2] and 'many words won't fill a bushel,'[3] as Poor Richard says." They all joined, desiring him to speak his mind, and gathering round him he proceeded as follows:

Friends and neighbors, the taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our IDLENESS, three times as much by our PRIDE, and four times as much by our FOLLY; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot ease or deliver us by allowing an abatement. However, let us hearken to good advice, and something may be done for us. "God helps them that help themselves," as Poor Richard says in his almanac of 1733.

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[1] A vendue is an auction.

[2] Very few of the proverbs which Franklin made use of in his almanacs were original with him. As he said in his comment, they represented "the wisdom of many ages and nations."

[3] This is similar to that other proverbial expression—"Fine words butter no parsnips."

It would be thought a hard government that should tax its people one-tenth part of their TIME, to be employed in its service, but idleness taxes many of us much more, if we reckon all that is spent in absolute sloth or doing of nothing, with that which is spent in idle employments or amusements that amount to nothing. Sloth, by bringing on diseases, absolutely shortens life. "Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labor wears; while the used key is always bright," as Poor Richard says. "But dost thou love life? then do not squander time, for that's the stuff life is made of," as Poor Richard says.

How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep? forgetting that "the sleeping fox catches no poultry," and that "there will be sleeping enough in the grave," as Poor Richard says. If time be of all things the most precious, "wasting of time must be," as Poor Richard says, "the greatest prodigality;" since, as he elsewhere tells us, "lost time is never found again," and what we call "time enough! always proves little enough." Let us, then, up and be doing, and doing to the purpose; so by diligence shall we do more with less perplexity. "Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all things easy," as Poor Richard says; and "he that riseth late must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night; while laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him," as we read in Poor Richard; who adds, "drive thy business! let not that drive thee!" and

"Early to bed and early to rise
Makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."

So what signifies wishing and hoping for better times? We may make these times better if we bestir ourselves. "Industry need not wish," as Poor Richard says, and "he that lives on hope will die fasting." "There are no gains without pains; then help, hands! for I have no lands;" or, if I have, they are smartly taxed. And as Poor Richard likewise observes, "he that hath a trade hath an estate, and

"THE SLEEPING FOX CATCHES NO POULTRY"

he that hath a calling hath an office of profit and honor;" but then the trade must be worked at and the calling well followed, or neither the estate nor the office will enable us to pay our taxes. If we are industrious we shall never starve; for, as Poor Richard says, "at the working-man's house hunger looks in, but dares not enter." Nor will the bailiff or the constable enter, for "industry pays debt, while despair increaseth them."

What though you have found no treasure, nor has any rich relation left you a legacy, "diligence is the mother of good luck," as Poor Richard says, and "God gives all things to industry."

"Then plow deep while sluggards sleep,
And you shall have corn to sell and to keep,"

says Poor Dick. Work while it is called to-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered to-morrow; which makes Poor Richard say, "one to-day is worth two to-morrows;" and further, "have you somewhat to do to-morrow? Do it to-day!"

If you were a servant would you not be ashamed that a good master should catch you idle? Are you, then, your own master? "Be ashamed to catch yourself idle," as Poor Dick says. When there is so much to be done for yourself, your family, your country, and your gracious king, be up by peep of day! "Let not the sun look down and say, 'Inglorious here he lies!'" Handle your tools without mittens! remember that "the cat in gloves catches no mice!" as Poor Richard says.

'Tis true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak-handed; but stick to it steadily and you will see great effects; for "constant dropping wears away stones;" and "by diligence and patience the mouse ate in two the cable;" and "little strokes fell great oaks," as Poor Richard says in his almanac, the year I cannot just now remember.

Methinks I hear some of you say, "Must a man afford himself no leisure?" I will tell thee, my friend, what Poor Richard says, "employ thy time well if thou meanest to gain leisure;" and "since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour!" Leisure is time for doing something useful; this leisure the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man never; so that, as Poor Richard says, "a life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things." Do you imagine that sloth will afford you more comfort than labor? No! for, as Poor Richard says, "trouble springs from idleness and grievous toil from needless ease." "Many, without labor, would live by their wits only, but they'll break for want of stock;" whereas industry gives comfort, and plenty, and respect. "Fly pleasure and they'll follow you;" "the diligent spinner has a large shift;" and

"Now I have a sheep and a cow,
Everybody bids me good-morrow."

All which is well said by Poor Richard. But with our industry we must likewise be steady, settled, and careful, and oversee our own affairs with our own eyes and not trust too much to others; for, as Poor Richard says,

"I never saw an oft-removed tree
Nor yet an oft-removed family
That throve so well as those that settled be."

And again, "three removes are as bad as a fire";

and again, "keep thy shop and thy shop will keep thee"; and again, "if you would have your business done, go; if not, send." And again

"He that by the plow would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive."

And again, "the eye of the master will do more work than both his hands;" and again, "want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge;" and again, "not to oversee workmen is to leave them your purse open."

Trusting too much to others' care is the ruin of many; for, as the almanac says, "in the affairs of this world men are saved, not by faith, but by the want of it;" but a man's own care is profitable; for, saith Poor Dick, "learning is to the studious and riches to the careful;" as well as "power to the bold" and "heaven to the virtuous." And further, "if you would have a faithful servant and one that you like, serve yourself."

And again, he adviseth to circumspection and care, even in the smallest matters; because sometimes "a little neglect may breed great mischief;" adding, "for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the rider was lost;" being overtaken and slain by the enemy; all for the want of a little care about a horseshoe nail!

So much for industry, my friends, and attention to one's own business; but to these we must add frugality if we would make our industry more certainly successful. "A man may," if he knows not how to save as he goes "keep his nose all his life to the grindstone and die not worth a groat at last."

"A fat kitchen makes a lean will," as Poor Richard says; and

"Many estates are spent in the getting,
Since women for tea[4] forsook spinning and knitting,
And men for punch forsook hewing and splitting."

If you would be wealthy, says he in another almanac, "think of saving as well as of getting. The Indies have not made Spain rich, because her outgoes are greater than her incomes."

Away, then, with your expensive follies, and you will not have so much cause to complain of hard times, heavy taxes, and chargeable families; for, as Poor Dick says,

"Women and wine, game and deceit,
Make the wealth small and the wants great."

And further, "what maintains one vice would bring up two children." You may think, perhaps, that a little tea or a little punch now and then, a diet a little more costly, clothes a little finer, and a little more entertainment now and then, can be no great matter; but remember what Poor Richard says, "many a little makes a mickle"; and further, "beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship"; and again,

"Who dainties love shall beggars prove";

and moreover, "fools make feasts and wise men eat them."

Here are you all got together at this vendue of fineries and knick-knacks. You call them goods;

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[4] Tea at this time was expensive and regarded as a luxury.

but if you do not take care they will prove evils to some of you. You expect they will be sold cheap, and perhaps they may for less than they cost; but if you have no occasion for them they must be dear to you. Remember what Poor Richard says: "Buy what thou hast no need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy necessaries." And again, "at a great pennyworth pause awhile." He means that perhaps the cheapness is apparent only and not real; or the bargain by straitening thee in thy business may do thee more harm than good. For in another place he says, "many have been ruined by buying good pennyworths."

Again, Poor Richard says, " 'tis foolish to lay out money in a purchase of repentance;" and yet this folly is practiced every day at vendues for want of minding the almanac.

"Wise men," as Poor Richard says, "learn by others' harm; fools scarcely by their own;" but *Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.*[5] Many a one, for the sake of finery on the back, has gone with a hungry belly and half-starved his family. "Silks and satins, scarlets and velvets," as Poor Richard says, "put out the kitchen fire." These are not the necessaries of life; they can scarcely be called the conveniences; and yet, only because they look pretty, how many want to have them! The artificial wants of mankind thus become more numerous than the natural; and as Poor Dick says, "for one poor person there are a hundred indigent."

By these and other extravagances the genteel are reduced to poverty and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who, through industry and frugality, have maintained their standing; in which case it appears plainly that "a plowman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees," as Poor Richard says. Perhaps they have had a small estate left them, which they knew not the getting of; they think, " 'tis day and will never be night;" that "a little to be spent out of so much is not worth minding" (a child and a fool, as Poor Richard says, imagine twenty shillings and twenty years can never be spent) ; but "always taking out of the meal-tub, and never putting in, soon comes to the bottom." Then, as Poor Dick says, "when the well's dry they know the worth of water." But this they might have known before if they had taken his advice. "If you would know the value of money, go and try to borrow some;" for "he that goes a-borrowing goes a sorrowing," and indeed so does he that lends to such people, when he goes to get it in again.

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[5] He's a lucky fellow who is made prudent by other men's perils.

Poor Dick further advises and says:

"Fond pride of dress is, sure, a very curse;
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse."

And again, "pride is as loud a beggar as want and a great deal more saucy." When you have bought one fine thing you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but Poor Dick says, " 'tis easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follow it." And 'tis as true folly for the poor to ape the rich as for the frog to swell in order to equal the ox.

"Great estates may venture more,
But little boats should keep near shore."

'Tis, however, a folly soon punished; for "pride that dines on vanity sups on contempt," as Poor Richard says. And in another place, "pride breakfasted with plenty, dined with poverty, and supped with infamy."

And after all, of what use is this pride of appearance, for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote health or ease pain; it makes no increase of merit in the person; it creates envy; it hastens misfortune.

"What is a butterfly? At best
He's but a caterpillar drest,
The gaudy fop's his picture just,"

as Poor Richard says.

But what madness must it be to run into debt for these superfluities! We are offered by the terms of this vendue six months' credit; and that, perhaps, has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready money and hope now to be fine without it. But ah! think what you do when you run in debt: you give to another power over your liberty. If you cannot pay at the time you will be ashamed to see your creditor; you will be in fear when you speak to him; you will make poor, pitiful, sneaking excuses, and by degrees come to lose your veracity and sink into base, downright lying; for, as Poor Richard says, "the second vice is lying, the first is running into debt;" and again, to the same purpose, "lying rides upon debt's back;" whereas a free-born Englishman ought not to be ashamed or afraid to see or speak to any man living. But poverty often deprives a man of all spirit and virtue. " 'Tis hard for an empty bag to stand upright!" as Poor Richard truly says. What would you think of that prince or the government who should issue an edict forbidding you to dress like a gentleman or gentlewoman, on pain of imprisonment or servitude? Would you not say that you are free, have a right to dress as you please, and that such an edict would be a breach of your privileges and such a government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under such tyranny when you run in debt for such dress! Your creditor has authority, at his pleasure, to deprive you of your liberty by confining you in jail for life or to sell you for a servant if you should not be able to pay him. When you have got your bargain you may, perhaps, think little of payment; but "creditors," Poor Richard tells us, "have better memories than debtors;" and in another place says, "creditors are a superstitious set, great observers of set days and times."

The day comes round before you are aware, and the demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it; or, if you bear your debt in mind, the term which at first seemed so long will, as it lessens, appear extremely short. Time will seem to have added wings to his heels as well as his shoulders. "Those have a short Lent," saith Poor Richard, "who owe money to be paid at Easter." Then since, as he says, "the borrower is a slave to the lender and the debtor to the creditor," disdain the chain, preserve your freedom, and maintain your independence. Be industrious and free; be frugal and free. At present, perhaps, you may think yourself in thriving circumstances, and that you can bear a little extravagance without injury; but

"For age and want, save while you may;
No morning sun lasts a whole day."

As Poor Richard says, gain may be temporary and uncertain; but ever while you live expense is constant and certain; and " 'tis easier to build two chimneys than to keep one in fuel," as Poor Richard says; so, "rather go to bed supperless than rise in debt."

"Get what you can, and what you get hold;
'Tis the stone that will turn all your lead into gold,"[6]

as Poor Richard says: and when you have got the philosopher's stone, sure, you will no longer complain of bad times or the difficulty of paying taxes.

This doctrine, my friends, is reason and wisdom; but, after all, do not depend too much upon your own industry and frugality and prudence, though excellent things, for they may all be blasted without the blessing of Heaven; and therefore ask that blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember Job suffered and was afterward prosperous.

And now, to conclude, "experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that;" for it is true, "we may give advice, but we cannot give conduct," as Poor Richard says. However, remember this: "they that won't be counseled can't be helped," as Poor Richard says; and further, that "if you will not hear reason she'll surely rap your knuckles."

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[6] The philosopher's stone, so called; a mineral having the power of turning base metals into gold.

Thus the old gentleman ended his harangue. The people heard it and approved the doctrine, and immediately practiced the contrary, just as if it had been a common sermon. For the vendue opened and they began to buy extravagantly, notwithstanding all his cautions and their own fear of taxes. I found the good man had thoroughly studied my almanacs and digested all I had dropped on those topics during the course of twenty-five years. The frequent mention he made of me must have tired any one else; but my vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth part of the wisdom was my own which he ascribed to me, but rather the gleanings that I had made of the sense of all ages and nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the echo of it, and though I had at first determined to buy stuff for a new coat, I went away resolved to wear my old one a little longer. Reader, if thou wilt do the same, thy profit will be as great as mine. I am, as ever, thine to serve thee.

Richard Saunders.

July 7th, 1757.

GEORGE ROGERS CLARK

ONE of the most remarkable men of Revolutionary times was George Rogers Clark, and his exploits read more like those of the hero of some novel than like the deeds of a simple soldier and patriot.

In early boyhood and youth he acquired the rather scanty education which was then considered necessary for a child of fairly well-to-do parents, but he never applied himself so closely to his books as to lose his love for the woods and streams of the wild country that surrounded him. He became a surveyor, and among the wonders and trials of the wilderness lost much of the little polish he had acquired. But he learned the woods, the mountain passes and the river courses, and became fully acquainted with the wild human denizens of the forests. His six feet of muscular body, his courage and his fierce passions fitted him to lead men and to overawe his enemies, red or white. He had "red hair and a black penetrating eye," two gifts that marked him among the adventurous men who were finding their way across the Alleghanies. He tried farming, but succeeded better as a fighter in those fierce conflicts with Indians and border desperadoes which gave to Kentucky the name of "Dark and Bloody Ground."

In 1777, after the breaking out of the Revolution, there were several French settlements lying to the north of the Ohio and scattered from Detroit to the Mississippi. Among these were Mackinac, Green Bay, Prairie du Chien, Vincennes, Kaskaskia and Cahokia. The English were in possession of all these and held them usually by a single commanding officer and a very small garrison. The French inhabitants had made friends with the Indians, and in many instances had intermarried with them. Moreover, while they were submissive to the British they were by no means attached to them and were apparently quite likely to submit with equal willingness to the Americans should they succeed in the struggle. This was what Clark understood so thoroughly that he early became possessed of the idea that it would be a comparatively simple matter to secure to the United States all that promising land lying between the Alleghanies, the Ohio and the Mississippi.

The jealousy that existed between Pennsylvania and Virginia over an extension westward made it extremely difficult for Clark to get aid from the Colonies or even from Virginia, his native state. However, he succeeded in interesting Patrick Henry, then governor of Virginia, and preserving the greatest secrecy, he set about recruiting his forces.

It was a desperate undertaking, and the obstacles, naturally great, were made infinitely more trying by the fact that he could tell none of his men the real purpose for which they were enlisting. By May, 1778, however, he had secured one hundred and fifty backwoodsmen from the western reaches of Virginia. With these he started on his venturous undertaking.

Reuben Gold Thwaites, in his *How George Rogers Clark Won the Northwest,* describes the volunteers as follows:

"There was of course no attempt among them at military uniform, officers in no wise being distinguished from men. The conventional dress of eighteenth-century borderers was an adaptation to local conditions, being in part borrowed from the Indians. Their feet were encased in moccasins. Perhaps the majority of the corps had loose, thin trousers of homespun or buckskin, with a fringe of leather thongs down each outer seam of the legs; but many wore only leggings of leather, and were as bare of knee and thigh as a Highland clansman; indeed, many of the pioneers were Scotch-Irish, some of whom had been accustomed to this airy costume in the mother-land. Common to all were fringed hunting shirts or smocks, generally of buckskin—a picturesque, flowing garment reaching from neck to knees, and girded about the waist by a leathern belt, from which dangled the tomahawk and scalping-knife. On one hip hung the carefully scraped powder horn; on the other, a leather sack, serving both as game-bag and provision-pouch, although often the folds of the shirt, full and ample above the belt, were the depository for food and ammunition. A broad-brimmed felt hat, or a cap of fox-skin or squirrel-skin, with the tail dangling behind, crowned the often tall and always sinewy frontiersman. His constant companion was his home-made flint-lock rifle—a clumsy, heavy weapon, so long that it reached to the chin of the tallest man, but unerring in the hands of an expert marksman, such as was each of these backwoodsmen.

"They were rough in manners and in speech. Among them, we must confess, were men who had fled from the coast settlements because no longer to be tolerated in a law-abiding community. There were not lacking mean, brutal fellows, whose innate badness had on the untrammelled frontier developed into wickedness. Many joined Clark for mere adventure, for plunder and deviltry. The majority, however, were men of good parts, who sought to protect their homes at whatever peril—sincere men, as large of heart as they were of frame, many of them in later years developing into citizens of a high type of effectiveness in a frontier commonwealth. As a matter of history, most of them proved upon this expedition to be heroes worthy of the fame they won and the leader whom they followed."

Early in June Clark had reached the falls in the Ohio at the present city of Louisville, and here on an island commanding the falls he built a block house and planted some corn. Here he left the weak and dissatisfied members of his company, and having been joined by a few Kentucky volunteers, he resumed his journey down the river. His first goal was Kaskaskia on the Mississippi, and after a long and perilous journey, the latter part across the country, he captured the post by surprise, seizing the French commandant of the English garrison in an upper room of his own house. He had little difficulty in winning the confidence of the French settlers, who then willingly transferred their loyalty to the new Republic that claimed to be their friend.

A different situation developed with the Indians, but after skilful treatment and a long interview with representatives of the many tribes he succeeded in winning their friendship, or at least a quiet neutrality. In the meantime, Father Gibault, an active, friendly French priest, had crossed the country and induced the inhabitants of Vincennes to raise the American flag. Clark sent Captain Helm to take charge of the fort and to lead the French militia.

Clark's ambition was to capture Detroit, but so great were the difficulties besetting him that he was compelled to winter at Kaskaskia with insufficient forces, struggling to keep peace and to hold the country he had so successfully seized. In January, a month after the event happened, Clark heard that Hamilton had recaptured Vincennes for the British and was preparing to advance on Kaskaskia. Had Hamilton been prompt in his actions and proceeded at once against Clark he might easily have driven the latter from Kaskaskia and secured to the British the wonderful Northwest territory. His delays, however, gave Clark time to gather a larger force and to show his wonderful power as a leader and his skill as a military campaigner.

Few men could have accomplished what Clark did, for few have either the ability or the devotion. "I would have bound myself seven years a Slave," he says, "to have had five hundred troops." Nothing, however, deterred him. He built a large barge or galley, mounted small cannon upon it and manned it with a crew of forty men. This was dispatched to patrol the Ohio, and if possible to get within ten leagues of Vincennes on the Wabash. It was Clark's determination not to wait for attack from the British but to surprise Hamilton in his own fort. It required almost superhuman power to gather the men necessary from the motley crowds at Kaskaskia and from other posts on the river, but the day after the "Willing" (for so he named his barge) sailed, he moved out of Kaskaskia, with a hundred and seventy men following him, to march the two hundred and thirty miles across the wintry wilderness to Vincennes. How he fared and how he accomplished his desire you may read in the selection from his journal.

Clark's activity did not end with the capture of Vincennes, but that was the most remarkable of his long series of military achievements. No more heroic man ever lived, and few Americans have left such a memory for high patriotism, self-sacrifice and wonderful achievement. His accomplishments are unparalleled in the history of the Mississippi valley, and the youth of the region may well be proud that to such a man they are indebted for their right to live in the United States.

Unfortunately, Clark's later years were not in keeping with his early character. He felt that his country was ungrateful to him, the liquor habit mastered him, he was mixed up in unfortunate political deals with France, and at last sank into poverty and was almost forgotten. It is said that once when in his latter years the State of Virginia sent him a sword in token of their appreciation of his services, he angrily thrust the sword into the ground and broke the blade with his crutch, while he cried out: "When Virginia needed a sword I gave her one. She sends me now a toy. I want bread!"

He lived until 1818, and then died at his sister's house near Louisville, and was buried at Cave Hill Cemetery in that city.

THE CAPTURE OF VINCENNES[1]

By George Rogers Clark[2]

EVERYTHING being ready, on the 5th of February, after receiving a lecture and absolution from the priest, we crossed the Kaskaskia River with one hundred and seventy men, marched about three miles and encamped, where we lay until the 7th, and set out. The weather wet (but fortunately not cold for the season) and a great part of the plains under water several inches deep. It was very difficult and fatiguing marching. My object was now to keep the men in spirits. I suffered them to shoot game on all occasions, and feast on it like Indian war-dancers, each company by turns inviting the others to their feasts, which was the case every night, as the company that was to give the feast was always supplied with horses to lay up a sufficient store of wild meat in the course of the day, myself and principal officers putting on the woodsmen, shouting now and then, and running as much through the mud and water as any of them.

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[1] The first permanent settlement in Indiana was made on the Wabash River 117 miles southwest of the present city of Indianapolis. On what was originally the location of a prominent Indian village, the French established a fort in 1702, and it was generally known as *The Post*. In 1736 the name of Vinsenne, an early commandant of the post, was applied to the little settlement, and this name later came to be written *Vincennes*, in its present form.

The English took the place in 1763; in 1778 the weak English garrison was driven out by the forerunners of George Rogers Clark, who from Kaskaskia sent Captain Helm to take charge. The same winter Captain Helm and the one soldier who constituted his garrison were compelled to surrender to the British General, Hamilton, who had come from Detroit to recapture the fort. It was in the following February that Clark made the final capture as told in these memoirs. Thereafter Vincennes belonged to Virginia, who ceded it to the United States in 1783. Vincennes was the capital of Indiana territory from 1801 to 1816.

[2] The selection is taken from General Clark's Memoirs.

Thus, insensibly, without a murmur, were those men led on to the banks of the Little Wabash, which we reached on the 13th, through incredible difficulties, far surpassing anything that any of us had ever experienced. Frequently the diversions of the night wore off the thoughts of the preceding day. We formed a camp on a height which we found on the bank of the river, and suffered our troops to amuse themselves.

I viewed this sheet of water for some time with distrust; but, accusing myself of doubting, I immediately set to work, without holding any consultation about it, or suffering anybody else to do so in my presence; ordered a pirogue to be built immediately, and acted as though crossing the water would be only a piece of diversion. As but few could work at the pirogue at a time, pains were taken to find diversion for the rest to keep them in high spirits. In the evening of the 14th, our vessel was finished, manned, and sent to explore the drowned lands, on the opposite side of the Little Wabash, with private instructions what report to make, and, if possible, to find some spot of dry land. They found about half an acre, and marked the trees from thence back to the camp, and made a very favorable report.

Fortunately, the 15th happened to be a warm, moist day for the season. The channel of the river where we lay was about thirty yards wide. A scaffold was built on the opposite shore (which was about three feet under water), and our baggage ferried across, and put on it. Our horses swam across, and received their loads at the scaffold, by which time the troops were also brought across, and we began our march through the water.

By evening we found ourselves encamped on a pretty height, in high spirits, each party laughing at the other, in consequence of something that had happened in the course of this ferrying business, as they called it. A little antic drummer afforded them great diversion by floating on his drum, etc. All this was greatly encouraged; and they really began to think themselves superior to other men, and that neither the rivers nor the seasons could stop their progress. Their whole conversation now was concerning what they would do when they got about the enemy. They now began to view the main Wabash as a creek, and made no doubt but such men as they were could find a way to cross it. They wound themselves up to such a pitch that they soon took Post Vincennes, divided the spoil, and before bedtime were far advanced on their route to Detroit. All this was, no doubt, pleasing to those of us who had more serious thoughts.

We were now convinced that the whole of the low country on the Wabash was drowned, and that the enemy could easily get to us, if they discovered us, and wished to risk an action; if they did not, we made no doubt of crossing the river by some means or other. Even if Captain Rogers, with our galley, did not get to his station agreeable to his appointment, we flattered ourselves that all would be well, and marched on in high spirits.

The last day's march through the water was far superior to anything the Frenchmen[3] had an idea of. They were backward in speaking; said that the nearest land to us was a small league called the Sugar Camp, on the bank of the [river?]. A canoe was sent off, and returned without finding that we could pass. I went in her myself, and sounded the water; found it deep as to my neck. I returned with a design to have the men transported on board the canoes to the Sugar Camp, which I knew would spend the whole day and ensuing night, as the vessels would pass slowly through the bushes. The loss of so much time, to men half-starved, was a matter of consequence. I would have given now a great deal for a day's provision or for one of our horses. I returned but slowly to the troops, giving myself time to think.

On our arrival, all ran to hear what was the report. Every eye was fixed on me. I unfortunately spoke in a serious manner to one of the officers. The whole were alarmed without knowing what I said. I viewed their confusion for about one minute, whispered to those near me to do as I did: immediately put some water in my hand, poured on powder, blackened my face, gave the war-whoop, and marched into the water without saying a word. The party gazed, and fell in, one after another, without saying a word, like a flock of sheep. I ordered those near me to begin a favorite song of theirs. It soon passed through the line, and the whole went on cheerfully. I now intended to have them transported across the deepest part of the water; but, when about waist deep, one of the men informed me that he thought he felt a path. We examined, and found it so, and concluded that it kept on the highest ground, which it did; and, by taking pains to follow it we got to the Sugar Camp without the least difficulty, where there was about half an acre of dry ground, at least not under water, where we took up our lodging.

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[3] These were men from Vincennes whom Clark had taken from canoes and from whom he obtained much information, although it was not given with perfect willingness.

The Frenchmen that we had taken on the river appeared to be uneasy at our situation. They begged that they might be permitted to go in the two canoes to town in the night. They said that they would bring from their own houses provisions, without a possibility of any persons knowing it; that some of our men should go with them as a surety of their good conduct; that it was impossible we could march from that place till the water fell, for the plain was too deep to march. Some of the [officers?] believed that it might be done. I would not suffer it. I never could well acount for this piece of obstinacy, and give satisfactory reasons to myself or anybody else why I denied a proposition apparently so easy to execute and of so much advantage; but something seemed to tell me that it should not be done, and it was not done.

The most of the weather that we had on this march was moist and warm for the season. This was the coldest night we had. The ice, in the morning, was from one-half to three-quarters of an inch thick near the shores and in still water. The morning was the finest we had on our march. A little after sunrise I lectured the whole. What I said to them I forgot, but it may be easily imagined by a person that could possess my affections for them at that time. I concluded by informing them that passing the plain that was then in full view and reaching the opposite

CLARK TOOK THE LEAD

woods would put an end to their fatigue, that in a few hours they would have a sight of their long-wished-for object, and immediately stepped into the water without waiting for any reply. A huzza took place.

As we generally marched through the water in a line, before the third entered I halted, and called to Major Bowman, ordering him to fall in the rear with twenty-five men, and put to death any man who refused to march, as we wished to have no such person among us. The whole gave a cry of approbation, and on we went. This was the most trying of all the difficulties we had experienced. I generally kept fifteen or twenty of the strongest men next myself, and judged from my own feelings what must be that of others. Getting about the middle of the plain, the water about mid-deep, I found myself sensibly failing; and, as there were no trees nor bushes for the men to support themselves by, I feared that many of the most weak would be drowned.

I ordered the canoes to make the land, discharge their loading, and play backward and forward with all diligence, and pick up the men; and, to encourage the party, sent some of the strongest men forward, with orders, when they got to a certain distance, to pass the word back that the water was getting shallow, and when getting near the woods to cry out, 'Land!' This stratagem had its desired effect. The men, encouraged by it, exerted themselves almost beyond their abilities; the weak holding by the stronger.

The water never got shallower, but continued deepening. Getting to the woods, where the men expected land, the water was up to my shoulders; but gaining the woods was of great consequence. All the low men and the weakly hung to the trees, and floated on the old logs until they were taken off by the canoes. The strong and tall got ashore and built fires. Many would reach the shore, and fall with their bodies half in the water, not being able to support themselves without it.

This was a delightful dry spot of ground of about ten acres. We soon found that the fires answered no purpose, but that two strong men taking a weaker one by the arms was the only way to recover him; and, being a delightful day, it soon did. But, fortunately, as if designed by Providence, a canoe of Indian squaws and children was coming up to town, and took through part of this plain as a nigh way. It was discovered by our canoes as they were out after the men. They gave chase, and took the Indian canoe, on board of which was near half a quarter of a buffalo, some corn, tallow, kettles, and other provisions. This was a grand prize, and was invaluable. Broth was immediately made, and served out to the most weakly with great care. Most of the whole got a little; but a great many gave their part to the weakly, jocosely saying something cheering to their comrades. This little refreshment and fine weather by the afternoon gave new life to the whole.

Crossing a narrow deep lake in the canoes, and marching some distance, we came to a copse of timber called the Warrior's Island. We were now in full view of the fort and town, not a shrub between us, at about two miles distance. Every man now feasted his eyes, and forgot that he had suffered anything, saying that all that had passed was owing to good policy and nothing but what a man could bear; and that a soldier had no right to think, etc.,—passing from one extreme to another, which is common in such cases.

It was now we had to display our abilities. The plain between us and the town was not a perfect level. The sunken grounds were covered with water full of ducks. We observed several men out on horseback, shooting them, within a half mile of us, and sent out as many of our active young Frenchmen to decoy and take one of these men prisoner in such a manner as not to alarm the others, which they did. The information we got from this person was similar to that which we got from those we took on the river, except that of the British having that evening completed the wall of the fort, and that there were a good many Indians in town.

Our situation was now truly critical,—no possibility of retreating in case of defeat, and in full view of a town that had, at this time, upward of six hundred men in it,—troops, inhabitants, and Indians. The crew of the galley, though not fifty men, would have been now a reënforcement of immense magnitude to our little army (if I may so call it), but we would not think of them. We were now in the situation that I had labored to get ourselves in. The idea of being made prisoner was foreign to almost every man, as they expected nothing but torture from the savages, if they fell into their hands. Our fate was now to be determined, probably in a few hours. We knew that nothing but the most daring conduct would insure success.

I knew that a number of the inhabitants wished us well, that many were lukewarm to the interest of either, and I also learned that the grand chief, the Tobacco's son, had but a few days before openly declared, in council with the British, that he was a brother and friend to the Big Knives. These were favorable circumstances; and, as there was but little probability of our remaining until dark undiscovered, I determined to begin the career immediately, and wrote the following placard to the inhabitants:—

"TO THE INHABITANTS OF POST VINCENNES:

"*Gentlemen*:—Being now within two miles of your village, with my army, determined to take your fort this night, and not being willing to surprise you, I take this method to request such of you as are true citizens and willing to enjoy the liberty I bring you to remain still in your houses; and those, if any there be, that are friends to the king will instantly repair to the fort, and join the hair-buyer[4] general, and fight like men. And, if any such as do not go to the fort shall be discovered afterward, they may depend on severe punishment. On the contrary, those who are true friends to liberty may depend on being well treated; and I once more request them to keep out of the streets. For every one I find in arms on my arrival I shall treat him as an enemy.

"(Signed) G. R. CLARK."

I had various ideas on the supposed results of this letter. I knew that it could do us no damage, but that it would cause the lukewarm to be decided, encourage our friends, and astonish our enemies.

We anxiously viewed this messenger until he entered the town, and in a few minutes could discover by our glasses some stir in every street that we could penetrate into, and great numbers running or riding out into the commons, we supposed, to view us, which was the case. But what surprised us was that nothing had yet happened that had the appearance of the garrison being alarmed,—no drum nor gun. We began to suppose that the information we got from our prisoners was false, and that the enemy already knew of us, and were prepared.

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[4] It was said with some show of justice that General Hamilton had paid the Indians a bounty on the scalps of American settlers. His course in many ways had aroused the bitterest hatred among the colonists, and especially among the "Big Knives."

A little before sunset we moved, and displayed ourselves in full view of the town, crowds gazing at us. We were plunging ourselves into certain destruction or success. There was no midway thought of. We had but little to say to our men, except inculcating an idea of the necessity of obedience, etc. We knew they did not want encouraging, and that anything might be attempted with them that was possible for such a number,—perfectly cool, under proper subordination, pleased with the prospect before them, and much attached to their officers. They all declared that they were convinced that an implicit obedience to orders was the only thing that would insure success, and hoped that no mercy would be shown the person that should violate them. Such language as this from soldiers to persons in our station must have been exceedingly agreeable.

We moved on slowly in full view of the town; but, as it was a point of some consequence to us to make ourselves appear as formidable, we, in leaving the covert that we were in, marched and countermarched in such a manner that we appeared numerous. In raising volunteers in the Illinois, every person that set about the business had a set of colors given him, which they brought with them to the amount of ten or twelve pairs. These were displayed to the best advantage; and, as the low plain we marched through was not a perfect level, but had frequent risings in it seven or eight feet higher than the common level (which was covered with water), and as these risings generally run in an oblique direction to the town, we took the advantage of one of them, marching through the water under it, which completely prevented our being numbered. But our colors showed considerably above the heights, as they were fixed on long poles procured for the purpose, and at a distance made no despicable appearance; and, as our young Frenchmen had, while we lay on the Warrior's Island, decoyed and taken several fowlers with their horses, officers were mounted on these horses, and rode about, more completely to deceive the enemy.

In this manner we moved, and directed our march in such a way as to suffer it to be dark before we had advanced more than half-way to the town. We then suddenly altered our direction, and crossed ponds where they could not have suspected us, and about eight o'clock gained the heights back of the town. As there was yet no hostile appearance, we were impatient to have the cause unriddled. Lieutenant Bayley was ordered, with fourteen men, to march and fire on the fort. The main body moved in a different direction, and took possession of the strongest part of the town.

The firing now commenced on the fort, but they did not believe it was an enemy until one of their men was shot down through a port, as drunken Indians frequently saluted the fort after night. The drums now sounded, and the business fairly commenced on both sides. Re-enforcements were sent to the attack of the garrison, while other arrangements were making in town.

We now found that the garrison had known nothing of us; that, having finished the fort that evening, they had amused themselves at different games, and had just retired before my letter arrived, as it was near roll-call. The placard being made public, many of the inhabitants were afraid to show themselves out of the houses for fear of giving offence, and not one dare give information. Our friends flew to the commons and other convenient places to view the pleasing sight. This was observed from the garrison, and the reason asked, but a satisfactory excuse was given; and, as a part of the town lay between our line of march and the garrison, we could not be seen by the sentinels on the walls.

Captain W. Shannon and another being some time before taken prisoners by one of their [scouting parties], and that evening brought in, the party had discovered at the Sugar Camp some signs of us. They supposed it to be a party of observation that intended to land on the height some distance below the town. Captain Lamotte was sent to intercept them. It was at him the people said they were looking, when they were asked the reason of their unusual stir.

Several suspected persons had been taken to the garrison; among them was Mr. Moses Henry. Mrs. Henry went, under the pretense of carrying him provisions, and whispered him the news and what she had seen. Mr. Henry conveyed it to the rest of his fellow-prisoners, which gave them much pleasure, particularly Captain Helm, who amused himself very much during the siege, and, I believe, did much damage.

Ammunition was scarce with us, as the most of our stores had been put on board of the galley. Though her crew was but few, such a reënforcement to us at this time would have been invaluable in many instances. But, fortunately, at the time of its being reported that the whole of the goods in the town were to be taken for the king's use (for which the owners were to receive bills), Colonel Legras, Major Bosseron, and others had buried the greatest part of their powder and ball. This was immediately produced, and we found ourselves well supplied by those gentlemen.

The Tobacco's son, being in town with a number of warriors, immediately mustered them, and let us know that he wished to join us, saying that by morning he would have a hundred men. He received for answer that we thanked for his friendly disposition; and, as we were sufficiently strong ourselves, we wished him to desist, and that we would counsel on the subject in the morning; and, as we knew that there were a number of Indians in and near the town that were our enemies, some confusion might happen if our men should mix in the dark, but hoped that we might be favored with his counsel and company during the night, which was agreeable to him.

The garrison was soon completely surrounded, and the firing continued without intermission (except about fifteen minutes a little before day) until about nine o'clock the following morning. It was kept up by the whole of the troops, joined by a few of the young men of the town, who got permission, except fifty men kept as a reserve.

I had made myself fully acquainted with the situation of the fort and town and the parts relative to each. The cannon of the garrison was on the upper floors of strong blockhouses at each angle of the fort, eleven feet above the surface, and the ports so badly cut that many of our troops lay under the fire of them within twenty or thirty yards of the walls. They did no damage, except to the buildings of the town, some of which they much shattered; and their musketry, in the dark, employed against woodsmen covered by houses, palings, ditches, the banks of the river, etc., was but of little avail, and did no injury to us except wounding a man or two.

As we could not afford to lose men, great care was taken to preserve them, sufficiently covered, and to keep up a hot fire in order to intimidate the enemy as well as to destroy them. The embrasures of their cannon were frequently shut, for our riflemen, finding the true direction of them, would pour in such volleys when they were opened that the men could not stand to the guns. Seven or eight of them in a short time got cut down. Our troops would frequently abuse the enemy, in order to aggravate them to open their ports and fire their cannon, that they might have the pleasure of cutting them down with their rifles, fifty of which, perhaps, would be levelled the moment the port flew open; and I believe that, if they had stood at their artillery, the greater part of them would have been destroyed in the course of the night, as the greater part of our men lay within thirty yards of the walls, and in a few hours were covered equally to those within the walls, and much more experienced in that mode of fighting.

Sometimes an irregular fire, as hot as possible, was kept up from different directions for a few minutes, and then only a continual scattering fire at the ports as usual; and a great noise and laughter immediately commenced in different parts of the town, by the reserved parties, as if they had only fired on the fort a few minutes for amusement, and as if those continually firing at the fort were only regularly relieved. Conduct similar to this kept the garrison constantly alarmed. They did not know what moment they might be stormed or [blown up?], as they could plainly discover that we had flung up some entrenchments across the streets, and appeared to be frequently very busy under the bank of the river, which was within thirty feet of the walls.

The situation of the magazine we knew well. Captain Bowman began some works in order to blow it up, in the case our artillery should arrive; but, as we knew that we were daily liable to be overpowered by the numerous bands of Indians on the river, in case they had again joined the enemy (the certainty of which we were unacquainted with), we resolved to lose no time, but to get the fort in our possession as soon as possible. If the vessel did not arrive before the ensuing night, we resolved to undermine the fort, and fixed on the spot and plan of executing this work, which we intended to commence the next day.

The Indians of different tribes that were inimical had left the town and neighborhood. Captain Lamotte continued to hover about it in order, if possible, to make his way good into the fort. Parties attempted in vain to surprise him. A few of his party were taken, one of which was Maisonville, a famous Indian partisan. Two lads had captured him, tied him to a post in the street, and fought from behind him as a breastwork, supposing that the enemy would not fire at them for fear of killing him, as he would alarm them by his voice. The lads were ordered, by an officer who discovered them at their amusement, to untie their prisoner, and take him off to the guard, which they did, but were so inhuman as to take part of his scalp on the way. There happened to him no other damage.

As almost the whole of the persons who were most active in the department of Detroit were either in the fort or with Captain Lamotte, I got extremely uneasy for fear that he would not fall into our power, knowing that he would go off, if he could not get into the fort in the course of the night. Finding that, without some unforeseen accident, the fort must inevitably be ours, and that a reënforcement of twenty men, although considerable to them, would not be of great moment to us in the present situation of affairs, and knowing that we had weakened them by killing or wounding many of their gunners, after some deliberation, we concluded to risk the reënforcement in preference of his going again among the Indians. The garrison had at least a month's provisions; and, if they could hold out, in the course of that time he might do us much damage.

A little before day the troops were withdrawn from their positions about the fort, except a few parties of observation, and the firing totally ceased. Orders were given, in case of Lamotte's approach, not to alarm or fire on him without a certainty of killing or taking the whole. In less than a quarter of an hour, he passed within ten feet of an officer and a party that lay concealed. Ladders were flung over to them; and, as they mounted them, our party shouted. Many of them fell from the top of the walls,—some within, and others back; but, as they were not fired on, they all got over, much to the joy of their friends. But, on considering the matter, they must have been convinced that it was a scheme of ours to let them in, and that we were so strong as to care but little about them or the manner of their getting into the garrison.

The firing immediately commenced on both sides with double vigor; and I believe that more noise could not have been made by the same number of men. Their shouts could not be heard for the firearms; but a continual blaze was kept around the garrison, without much being done, until about daybreak, when our troops were drawn off to posts prepared for them, about sixty or seventy yards from the fort. A loophole then could scarcely be darkened but a rifle-ball would pass through it. To have stood to their cannon would have destroyed their men, without a probability of doing much service. Our situation was nearly similar. It would have been imprudent in either party to have wasted their men, without some decisive stroke required it.

Thus the attack continued until about nine o'clock on the morning of the 24th. Learning that the two prisoners they had brought in the day before had a considerable number of letters with them, I supposed it an express that we expected about this time, which I knew to be of the greatest moment to us, as we had not received one since our arrival in the country; and, not being fully acquainted with the character of our enemy, we were doubtful that those papers might be destroyed, to prevent which I sent a flag [with a letter] demanding the garrison.[5]

* * *

The firing then commenced warmly for a considerable time; and we were obliged to be careful in preventing our men from exposing themselves too much, as they were now much animated, having been refreshed during the flag. They frequently mentioned their wishes to storm the place, and put an end to the business at once. The firing was heavy through every crack that could be discovered in any part of the fort. Several of the garrison got wounded, and no possibility of standing near the embrasures. Toward the evening a flag appeared with the following proposals:—

"Lieutenant-governor Hamilton proposes to Colonel Clark a truce for three days, during which time he promises there shall be no defensive works carried on in the garrison, on condition that Colonel Clark shall observe, on his part, a like cessation of any defensive work,—that is, he wishes to confer with Colonel Clark as soon as can be, and promises that whatever may pass between them two and another person mutually agreed upon to be present shall remain secret till matters be finished, as he wishes that, whatever the result of the conference may be, it may tend to the honor and credit of each party. If Colonel Clark makes a difficulty of coming into the fort, Lieutenant-governor Hamilton will speak to him by the gate.

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[5] The letter addressed to Lieutenant-governor Hamilton read as follows:

"SIR:—In order to save yourself from the impending storm that now threatens you, I order you immediately to surrender yourself, with all your garrison, stores, etc. For, if I am obliged to storm, you may depend on such treatment as is justly due to a murderer. Beware of destroying stores of any kind or any papers or letters that are in your possession, or hurting one house in town; for, by heavens! if you do, there shall be no mercy shown you.

(Signed) G. R. CLARK."

In reply the British officer sent the following:

"Lieutenant-governor Hamilton begs leave to acquaint Colonel Clark that he and his garrison are not disposed to be awed into any action unworthy British subjects."

"(Signed) HENRY HAMILTON.
"24th February, 1779."

I was at a great loss to conceive what reason Lieutenant-governor Hamilton could have for wishing a truce of three days on such terms as he proposed. Numbers said it was a scheme to get me into their possession. I had a different opinion and no idea of his possessing such sentiments, as an act of that kind would infallibly ruin him. Although we had the greatest reason to expect a reënforcement in less than three days, that would at once put an end to the siege, I yet did not think it prudent to agree to the proposals, and sent the following answer:—

"Colonel Clark's compliments to Lieutenant-governor Hamilton, and begs leave to inform him that he will not agree to any terms other than Mr. Hamilton's surrendering himself and garrison prisoners at discretion. If Mr. Hamilton is desirous of a conference with Colonel Clark, he will meet him at the church with Captain Helm.

"(Signed) G. R. C.
"February 24th, 1779."

We met at the church, about eighty yards from the fort, Lieutenant-governor Hamilton, Major

Hay, superintendent of Indian affairs, Captain Helm, their prisoner, Major Bowman, and myself. The conference began. Hamilton produced terms of capitulation, signed, that contained various articles, one of which was that the garrison should be surrendered on their being permitted to go to Pensacola on parole. After deliberating on every article, I rejected the whole.

He then wished that I would make some proposition. I told him that I had no other to make than what I had already made,—that of his surrendering as prisoners at discretion. I said that his troops had behaved with spirit; that they could not suppose that they would be worse treated in consequence of it; that, if he chose to comply with the demand, though hard, perhaps the sooner the better; that it was in vain to make any proposition to me; that he, by this time, must be sensible that the garrison would fall; that both of us must [view?] all blood spilt for the future by the garrison as murder; that my troops were already impatient, and called aloud for permission to tear down and storm the fort. If such a step was taken, many, of course, would be cut down; and the result of an enraged body of woodsmen breaking in must be obvious to him. It would be out of the power of an American officer to save a single man.

Various altercation took place for a considerable time. Captain Helm attempted to moderate our fixed determination. I told him he was a British prisoner; and it was doubtful whether or not he could, with propriety, speak on the subject. Hamilton then said that Captain Helm was from that moment liberated, and might use his pleasure. I informed the Captain that I would not receive him on such terms; that he must return to the garrison, and await his fate. I then told Lieutenant-governor Hamilton that hostilities should not commence until five minutes after the drums gave the alarm.

WE MET AT THE CHURCH

We took our leave, and parted but a few steps, when Hamilton stopped, and politely asked me if

I would be so kind as to give him my reasons for refusing the garrison any other terms than those I had offered. I told him I had no objections in giving him my real reasons, which were simply these: that I knew the greater part of the principal Indian partisans of Detroit were with him; that I wanted an excuse to put them to death or otherwise treat them as I thought proper; that the cries of the widows and the fatherless on the frontiers, which they had occasioned, now required their blood from my hand; and that I did not choose to be so timorous as to disobey the absolute commands of their authority, which I looked upon to be next to divine; that I would rather lose fifty men than not to empower myself to execute this piece of business with propriety; that, if he chose to risk the massacre of his garrison for their sakes, it was his own pleasure; and that I might, perhaps, take it into my head to send for some of those widows to see it executed.

Major Hay paying great attention, I had observed a kind of distrust in his countenance, which in a great measure influenced my conversation during this time. On my concluding, "Pray, sir," said he, "who is it that you call Indian partisans?" "Sir," I replied, "I take Major Hay to be one of the principal." I never saw a man in the moment of execution so struck as he appeared to be,—pale and trembling, scarcely able to stand. Hamilton blushed, and, I observed, was much affected at his behavior. Major Bowman's countenance sufficiently explained his disdain for the one and his sorrow for the other.

Some moments elapsed without a word passing on either side. From that moment my resolutions changed respecting Hamilton's situation. I told him that we would return to our respective posts; that I would reconsider the matter, and let him know the result. No offensive measures should be taken in the meantime. Agreed to; and we parted. What had passed being made known to our officers, it was agreed that we should moderate our resolutions.

That afternoon the following articles were signed and the garrison surrendered:

I. Lieutenant-governor Hamilton engages to deliver up to Colonel Clark, Fort Sackville, as it is at present, with all the stores, etc.

II. The garrison are to deliver themselves as prisoners of war, and march out with their arms and accoutrements, etc.

III. The garrison to be delivered up at ten o'clock tomorrow.

IV. Three days time to be allowed the garrison to settle their accounts with the inhabitants and traders of this place.

V. The officers of the garrison to be allowed their necessary baggage, etc.

Signed at Post St. Vincent (Vincennes), 24th of February, 1779.

Agreed for the following reasons: the remoteness from succor; the state and quantity of provisions, etc.; unanimity of officers and men in its expediency; the honorable terms allowed; and, lastly, the confidence in a generous enemy.

(Signed) HENRY HAMILTON,
Lieut.-Gov. and Superintendent.

* * *

The business being now nearly at an end, troops were posted in several strong houses around the garrison and patroled during the night to prevent any deception that might be attempted. The remainder on duty lay on their arms, and for the first time for many days past got some rest.

During the siege, I got only one man wounded. Not being able to lose many, I made them secure themselves well. Seven were bady wounded in the fort through ports.

Almost every man had conceived a favorable opinion of Lieutenant-governor Hamilton,—I believe what affected myself made some impression on the whole; and I was happy to find that he never deviated, while he stayed with us, from that dignity of conduct that became an officer in his situation. The morning of the 25th approaching, arrangements were made for receiving the garrison [which consisted of seventy-nine men], and about ten o'clock it was delivered in form; and everything was immediately arranged to the best advantage.[7]

[7] Clark was a man of action, not a scholar; and the errors of which his writings are full may well be overlooked, so full of interest is what he says. The selections above have been slightly changed, principally, however, in spelling and the use of capital letters.

Hamilton was sent in irons to Virginia and was kept in close confinement, at Williamsburg, till nearly the end of the Revolution. Washington wrote, as a reason for not exchanging the British prisoner, that he "had issued proclamations and approved of practices, which were marked with cruelty towards the people that fell into his hands, such as inciting the Indians to bring in scalps, putting prisoners in irons, and giving men up to be the victims of savage barbarity."

THREE SUNDAYS IN A WEEK

Adapted from EDGAR A. POE

NOTE.—The ingeniousness of the idea in this story marks it as Poe's, though it lacks some of the characteristics which we expect to find in everything that came from the brain of that most unusual writer. Many of his poems and many of his most famous stories, such as *Ligeia*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *Eleanora*, and *The Masque of the Red Death*, have a fantastic horror about them which is scarcely to be found in the writings of any other man. *The Gold Bug*, which is included in Volume IX of this series is a characteristic example of another type of Poe's stories; it shows at its best his marvelous inventive power.

Three Sundays in a Week, as given here, has been abridged somewhat, though nothing that is essential to the story has been omitted.

YOU hard-hearted, dunder-headed, obstinate, rusty, crusty, musty, fusty, old savage!" said I, in fancy, one afternoon, to my granduncle, Rumgudgeon, shaking my fist at him in imagination.

Only in imagination. The fact is, some trivial difference did exist, just then, between what I said and what I had not the courage to say—between what I did and what I had half a mind to do.

The old porpoise, as I opened the drawing-room door, was sitting with his feet upon the mantelpiece, making strenuous efforts to accomplish a ditty.

"My *dear* uncle," said I, closing the door gently and approaching him with the blandest of smiles, "you are always so very kind and considerate, and have evinced your benevolence in so many—so very many ways—that—that I feel I have only to suggest this little point to you once more to make sure of your full acquiescence."

"Hem!" said he, "good boy! go on!"

"I am sure, my dearest uncle (you confounded old rascal!) that you have no design really and seriously to oppose my union with Kate. This is merely a joke of yours, I know—ha! ha! ha!—how very pleasant you are at times."

"Ha! ha! ha!" said he, "curse you! yes!"

"To be sure—of course! I knew you were jesting. Now, uncle, all that Kate and myself wish at present, is that you would oblige us—as regards the *time*—you know, uncle—in short, when will it be most convenient for yourself that the wedding shall—shall come off, you know?"

"Come off, you scoundrel! what do you mean by that?—Better wait till it goes on."

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he! he!—oh, that's good— oh, that's capital—such a wit! But all we want, just now, you know, uncle, is that you should indicate the time precisely."

"Ah!—precisely?"

"Yes, uncle—that is, if it would be quite agreeable to yourself."

"Wouldn't it answer, Bobby, if I were to leave it at random—sometime within a year or so, for example?—*must* I say precisely?"

"*If* you please, uncle—precisely."

"Well, then, Bobby, my boy—you're a fine fellow, aren't you?—since you *will* have the exact time, I'll —why, I'll oblige you for once."

"Dear uncle!"

"Hush, sir!" (drowning my voice)—"I'll oblige you for once. You shall have my consent—and the *plum,* we mustn't forget the plum—let me see! When shall it be? To-day's Sunday—isn't it! Well, then, you shall be married precisely—*precisely,* now mind!—*when three Sundays come together in a week!* Do you hear me, sir! What are you gaping at? I say, you shall have Kate and her plum when three Sundays come together in a week—but not *till* then—you young scapegrace—not *till* then, if I die for it. You know me—*I'm a man of my word—now be off!*" Here he grinned at me viciously, and I rushed from the room in despair.

"WELL, THEN, BOBBY, MY BOY"

A very "fine old English gentleman" was my granduncle, Rumgudgeon, but, unlike him of the song, he had his weak points. He was a little, pursy, pompous, .passionate, semi-circular somebody, with a red nose, a thick skull, a long purse, and a strong sense of his own consequence. With the best heart in the world, he contrived, through a predominate whim of contradiction, to earn for himself, among those who only knew him superficially, the character of a curmudgeon. Like many excellent people, he seemed possessed with a spirit of tantalization, which might easily, at a casual glance, be mistaken for malevolence. To every request, a positive "No!" was his immediate answer; but in the end—in the long, long end—there were exceedingly few requests which he refused. Against all attacks upon his purse he made the most sturdy defence; but the amount extorted from him at last, was generally in direct ratio with the length of the siege and the stubbornness of the resistance. In charity, no one gave more liberally, or with a worse grace.

For the fine arts, especially for the belles-lettres, he entertained a profound contempt. Thus my own inkling for the Muses had excited his entire displeasure. He assured me one day, when I asked him for a new copy of Horace, that the translation of *"Pocta nascitur, non fit"*[1] was "a nasty poet for nothing fit"—a remark which I took in high dudgeon. His repugnance to the "humanities" had, also, much increased of late, by an accidental bias in favor of what he supposed to be natural science. Somebody had accosted him in the street, mistaking him for a no less personage than Doctor Dubble L. Dee, the lecturer upon quack physics. This set him off at a tangent; and just at the epoch of this story, my granduncle, Rumgudgeon, was accessible and pacific only upon the points which happened to chime in with the hobby he was riding.

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[1] A poet is born, not made.

I had lived with the old gentleman all my life. My parents in dying had bequeathed me to him as a rich legacy. I believe the old villain loved me as his own child—nearly if not quite as well as he loved Kate—but it was a dog's existence that he led me after all. From my first year until my fifth, he obliged me with very regular floggings. From five to fifteen, he threatened me, hourly, with the House of Correction. From fifteen to twenty not a day passed in which he did not promise to cut me off with a shilling. I was a sad dog it is true, but then it was a part of my nature—a point of my faith.

In Kate, however, I had a firm friend, and I knew it. She was a good girl, and told me very sweetly that I might have her (plum and all) whenever I could badger my granduncle, Rumgudgeon, into the necessary consent. Poor girl! she was barely fifteen, and without this consent her little amount in the funds was not come-at-able until five immeasurable summers had "dragged their slow length along." What then to do? In vain we besieged the old gentleman with importunities. It would have stirred the indignation of Job himself to see how much like an old mouser he behaved to us two little mice. In his heart he wished for nothing more ardently than our union. He had made up his mind to this all along. In fact he would have given ten thousand pounds from his own pocket (Kate's plum was *her own*) if he could have invented anything like an excuse for complying with our very natural wishes. But then we had been so imprudent

"IN KATE, HOWEVER, I HAD A FIRM FRIEND"

as to broach the matter ourselves. Not to oppose it under the circumstances, I sincerely believe, was not in his power.

My granduncle was, after his own fashion, a man of his word, no doubt. The spirit of his vows he made no scruple of setting at naught, but the letter was a bond inviolable. Now it was this peculiarity in his disposition of which Kate's ingenuity enabled us one fine day, not long after our interview in the drawing-room, to take a very unexpected advantage.

It happened then—so the Fates ordered it—that among the naval acquaintances of my betrothed were two gentlemen who had just set foot upon the shores of England, after a year's absence, each, in foreign travel. In company with these gentlemen, Kate and I, preconcertedly, paid uncle Rumgudgeon a visit on the afternoon of Sunday, October the tenth—just three weeks after the memorable decision which had so cruelly defeated our hopes. For about half an hour the conversation ran upon ordinary topics; but at last we contrived, quite naturally, to give it the following turn:

Capt. Pratt. "Well, I have been absent just one year. Just one year to-day, as I live—let me see! yes!—this is October the tenth. You remember, Mr. Rumgudgeon, I called this day year, to bid you good-bye. And by the way, it does seem something like a coincidence, does it not—that our friend, Captain Smitherton, has been absent exactly a year also, a year to-day?"

Smitherton. "Yes! just one year to a fraction. You will remember, Mr. Rumgudgeon, that I called with Captain Pratt on this very day last year, to pay my parting respects."

Uncle. "Yes, yes, yes—I remember it very well—very queer indeed! Both of you gone just one year. A very strange coincidence indeed! Just what Doctor Dubble L. Dee would denominate an extraordinary concurrence of events. Doctor Dub—"

Kate (interrupting). "To be sure papa, it *is* something strange; but then Captain Pratt and Captain Smitherton didn't go altogether the same route, and that makes a difference you know."

Uncle. "I don't know any such thing, you hussy! How should I? I think it only makes the matter more remarkable. Doctor Dubble L. Dee—"

Kate. Why, papa, Captain Pratt went round Cape Horn, and Captain Smitherton doubled the Cape of Good Hope."

Uncle. "Precisely! the one went east and the other went west, you jade, and they have both gone quite round the world. By the bye, Doctor Dub—"

Myself (hurriedly). "Captain Pratt, you must come and spend the evening with us to-morrow—you and Smitherton—you can tell us all about your voyage, and we'll have a game of whist, and—"

Pratt. "Whist, my dear fellow—you forget. To-morrow will be Sunday. Some other evening—"

Kate. "Oh, no, fie!—Robert's not *quite* so bad as that. *To-day's* Sunday."

Uncle. "To be sure—to be sure."

Pratt. "I beg both your pardons—but I can't be so much mistaken. I know to-morrow's Sunday, because—"

Smitherton (much surprised). "What *are* you all thinking about? Wasn't *yesterday* Sunday, I should like to know?"

All. "Yesterday, indeed! you *are* out!"

Uncle. "To-day's Sunday, I say—don't I know?"

Pratt. "Oh, no!—to-morrow's Sunday."

Smitherton. "You are *all* mad—every one of you. I am as positive that yesterday was Sunday as I am that I sit upon this chair."

Kate (jumping up eagerly). "I see it—I see it all. Papa, this is a judgment upon you, about—about you know what. Let me alone, and I'll explain it all in a minute. It's a very simple thing, indeed. Captain Smitherton says that yesterday was Sunday: so it was; he is right. Cousin Bobby, and papa and I, say that to-day is Sunday: so it is, we are right. Captain Pratt maintains that to-morrow will be Sunday: so it will, he is right, too. The fact is, we are all right, and thus *three Sundays have come together in a week.*"

Smitherton (after a pause). "By the bye, Pratt, Kate has us completely. What fools we two are! Mr. Rumgudgeon, the matter stands thus: the earth, you know, is twenty-four thousand miles in circumference. Now this globe turns upon its own axis—revolves—spins around—these twenty-four thousand miles of extent, going from west to east, in precisely twenty-four hours. Do you understand, Mr. Rumgudgeon?"

Uncle. "To be sure—to be sure. Doctor Dub—"

Smitherton (drowning his voice). "Well sir, that is at the rate of one thousand miles per hour. Now, suppose that I sail from this position a thousand miles east. Of course I anticipate the rising of the sun here at London by just one hour. I see the sun rise one hour before you do. Proceeding, in the same direction, yet another thousand miles, I anticipate the rising by two hours—another thousand, and I anticipate it by three hours, and so on, until I go entirely round the globe, and back to this spot, when having gone twenty-four thousand miles east, I anticipate the rising of the London sun by no less than twenty-four hours; that is to say, I am a day *in advance* of your time. Understand, eh?"

Uncle. "But Dubble L. Dee—"

Smitherton (*speaking very loud*). "Captain Pratt, on the contrary, when he had sailed a thousand miles west of this position, was an hour, and when he had sailed twenty-four thousand miles west was twenty-four hours, or one day, *behind* the time at London. Thus, with me, yesterday was Sunday—thus with you, to-day is Sunday—and thus with Pratt, to-morrow will be Sunday. And what is more, Mr. Rumgudgeon, it is positively clear that that we are *all right;* for there can be no philosophical reason assigned why the idea of one of us should have preference over that of the other."

Uncle. "My eyes!—well, Kate—well Bobby!—this *is* a judgment upon me as you say. But I am a man of my word—*mark that!* You shall have her, my boy (plum and all), when you please. Done up, by Jove! Three Sundays in a row! I'll go and take Dubble L. Dee's opinion upon *that.*"

THE MODERN BELLE

By STARK

SHE sits in a fashionable parlor,
And rocks in her easy chair;
She is clad in silks and satins,
And jewels are in her hair;
She winks and giggles and simpers,
And simpers and giggles and winks;
And though she talks but little,
'Tis a good deal more than she thinks.

She lies abed in the morning
Till nearly the hour of noon,
Then comes down snapping and snarling
Because she was called so soon;
Her hair is still in papers,
Her cheeks still fresh with paint,—
Remains of her last night's blushes,
Before she intended to faint.

She dotes upon men unshaven,
And men with "flowing hair;"
She's eloquent over mustaches,
They give such a foreign air.
She talks of Italian music,
And falls in love with the moon;
And, if a mouse were to meet her,
She would sink away in a swoon

Her feet are so very little,
Her hands are so very white,

Her jewels so very heavy,
And her head so very light;
Her color is made of cosmetics
(Though this she will never own),
Her body is made mostly of cotton,
Her heart is made wholly of stone.

She falls in love with a fellow
Who swells with a foreign air;
He marries her for her money,
She marries him for his hair!
One of the very best matches,—
Both are well mated in life;
She's got a fool for a husband,
He's got a fool for a wife!

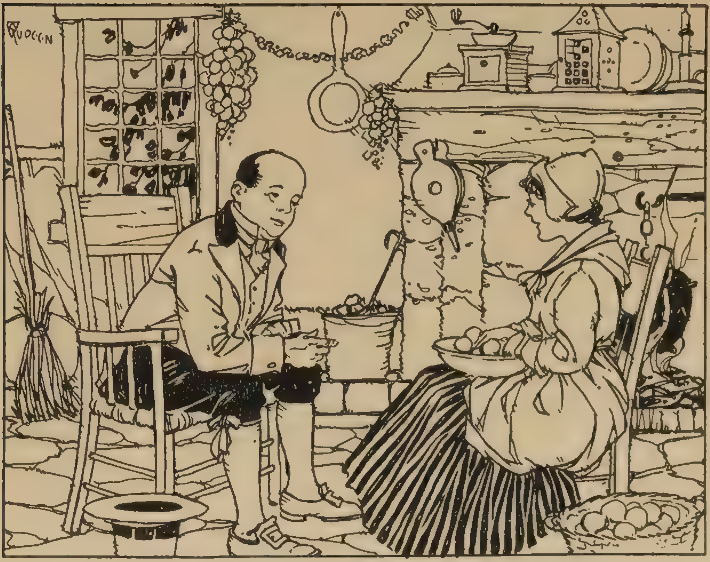
WIDOW MACHREE

By Samuel Lover

WIDOW machree, it's no wonder you frown,—
Och hone! widow machree;
Faith, it ruins your looks, that same dirty black gown,—
Och hone! widow machree.
How altered your air,
With that close cap you wear,—
'T is destroying your hair,
Which should be flowing free;
Be no longer a churl
Of its black silken curl,—
Och hone! widow machree!

Widow machree, now the summer is come,—
Och hone! widow machree,

When everything smiles, should a beauty look glum?
Och hone! widow machree!
See the birds go in pairs,
And the rabbits and hares;
Why, even the bears
Now in couples agree;
And the mute little fish,
Though they can't spake, they wish,—
Och hone! widow machree.



FAITH, I WISH YOU'D TAKE ME!

Widow machree, and when winter comes in,—
Och hone! widow machree,—
To be poking the fire all alone is a sin,
Och hone! widow machree.
Sure the shovel and tongs
To each other belongs,
And the kettle sings songs

Full of family glee;
While alone with your cup
Like a hermit you sup,
Och hone! widow machree.

And how do you know, with the comforts I've towld,—
Och hone! widow machree,—
But you're keeping some poor fellow out in the cowld,
Och hone! widow machree!
With such sins on your head,
Sure your peace would be fled;
Could you sleep in your bed
Without thinking to see
Some ghost or some sprite,
That would wake you each night,
Crying "Och hone! widow machree!"

Then take my advice, darling widow machree,—
Och hone! widow machree,—
And with my advice, Faith, I wish you'd take me,
Och hone! widow machree!
You'd have me to desire
Then to stir up the fire;
And sure hope is no liar
In whispering to me,
That the ghosts would depart
When you'd me near your heart,—
Och hone! widow machree!

LIMESTONE BROTH

By GERALD GRIFFIN

MY father went once upon a time about the country, in the idle season, seeing if he could make a penny at all by cutting hair or setting rashurs or penknives, or any other job that would fall in his way.

Weel an' good—he was one day walking alone in the mountains of Kerry, without a ha'p'ny in his pocket (for though he traveled afoot, it cost him more than he earned), an' knowing there was but little love for a County Limerick man in the place where he was, an' being half perished with the hunger, an' evening drawing nigh, he didn't know well what to do with himself till morning.

Very good—he went along the wild road: an' if he did, he soon sees a farmhouse at a little distance o' one side—a snug-looking place, with the smoke curling up out of the chimney, an' all tokens of good living inside. Well, some people would live where a fox would starve.

What do you think did my father do? He wouldn't beg (a thing one of our people never done yet, thank heaven!) an' he hadn't the money to buy a thing, so what does he do? He takes up a couple o' the big limestones that were lying in the road, in his two hands, an' away with him to the house.

HE SOON SEES A FARMHOUSE AT A LITTLE DISTANCE

'Lord save all here!' says he, walking in the door.

'And you kindly,' says they.

'I'm come to you,' says he, this way, looking at the two limestones, 'to know would ye let me make a little limestone broth over your fire, until I'll make my dinner?'

'Limestone broth!' says they to him again: 'what's that, *aroo*?'

'Broth made of limestone,' says he; 'what else?'

'We never heard of such a thing,' says they.

'Why, then, you may hear it now,' says he, 'an' see it also, if you'll gi' me a pot an' a couple o' quarts o' soft water.'

'You can have it an' welcome,' says they.

So they put down the pot an' the water, an' my father went over an' tuk a chair hard by the pleasant fire for himself, an' put down his two limestones to boil, an' kept stirrin' them round like stir-about.

Very good—well, by-an'-by, when the wather began to boil—' 'Tis thickening finely,' says my father; 'now if it had a grain o' salt at all, 'twould be a great improvement to it.'

'Raich down the salt-box, Nell,' says the man o' the house to his wife. So she did.

'Oh, that's the very thing, just,' says my father, shaking some of it into the pot. So he stirred it again a while, looking as sober as a minister. By-an'-by he takes the spoon he had stirring it an' tastes it.

'It is very good now,' says he, 'altho' it wants something yet.'

'What is it?' says they.

'Oyeh, wisha nothin',' says he; 'maybe 't is only fancy o' me.'

'If it's anything we can give you,' says they, 'you're welcome to it.'

' 'Tis very good as it is,' says he; 'but when I'm at home, I find it gives it a fine flavor just to boil a little knuckle o' bacon, or mutton trotters, or anything that way along with it.'

'Raich hether that bone o' sheep's head we had at dinner yesterday, Nell,' says the man o' the house.

'Oyeh, don't mind it,' says my father; 'let it be as it is.'

'Sure if it improves it, you may as well,' says they.

'Baithershin!' says my father, putting it down.

So after boiling it a good piece longer, ' 'Tis fine limestone broth,' says he, 'as ever was tasted, and if a man had a few piatez,' says he, looking at a pot o' them that was smoking in the chimney corner, 'he couldn't desire a better dinner.'

They gave him the piatez, and he made a good dinner of themselves and the broth, not forgetting the bone, which he polished equal to chaney before he let it go. The people themselves tasted it, an' tho't it as good as any mutton broth in the world."

THE KNOCKOUT

Adapted From The Autobiography of Davy Crockett

ONE day as I was walking through the woods, I came to a clearing on a hillside, and as I climbed the slope I was startled by loud, profane and boisterous voices which seemed to proceed from a thick cover of undergrowth about two hundred yards in advance of me.

"You kin, kin you?"

"Yes I kin and I'm able to do it! Boo-oo-oo!—O wake snakes, brimstone and fire! Don't hold me, Nick Stoval; the fight's made up and I'll jump down your throat before you kin say 'quit.' "

"Now Nick, don't hold him! Just let the wildcat come, and I'll tame him. Ned'll see me a fair fight, won't you Ned?"

"O yes, I'll see you a fair fight; blast my old shoes if I don't."

"That's sufficient, as Tom Haines said when he saw the elephant; now let him come."

Thus they went on with countless oaths and with much that I could not distinctly hear. In mercy's name, I thought, what a band of ruffians is at work here. I quickened my gait and had come nearly opposite the thick grove, whence the noises proceeded, when my eye caught, indistinctly through the foliage of the scrub oaks and hickories that intervened, glimpses of a man or men who seemed to be in a violent struggle. Occasionally, too, I could catch those deep-drawn, emphatic oaths which men utter when they deal heavy blows in conflict. As I was hurrying to the spot, I saw the combatants fall to the ground, and after a short struggle I saw the uppermost one (for I could not see the others) make a heavy plunge with both his thumbs. At the same instant I heard a cry in the accent of keenest torture—"Enough, my eye is out."

For a moment I stood completely horror-struck. The accomplices in this brutal deed had apparently all fled at my approach, for not a one was to be seen.

"Now blast your corn-shucking soul," said the victor, a lad of about eighteen, as he arose from the ground, "come cuttin' your shines 'bout me agin next time I come to the court-house will you? Get your owl-eye in agin if you kin."

At this moment he saw me for the first time. He looked frightened and was about to run away when I called out—"Come back, you brute, and help me relieve the poor critter you have ruined forever."

Upon this rough salutation he stopped, and with a taunting curl of the nose, replied. "You needn't kick before you're spurred. There an't nobody here nor han't been, nuther. I was just seeing how I could have fout." So saying, he pointed to his plow, which stood in the corner of the fence about fifty yards from the battle ground. Would any man in his senses believe that a rational being could make such a fool of himself? All that I had heard and seen was nothing more nor less than a rehearsal of a knock-down and drag-out fight in which the young man had played all the parts for his own amusement. I went to the ground from which he had risen, and there were the prints of his two thumbs plunged up to the balls in the mellow earth, and the ground around was broken up as if two stags had been fighting on it.

As I resumed my journey, I laughed outright at this adventure, for it reminded me of Andrew Jackson's attack on the United States bank. He had magnified it into a monster and then began to swear and gouge until he thought he had the monster on his back, and when the fight was over and he got up to look for his enemy, he could find none anywhere.

THE COUNTRY SQUIRE

Translated From The Spanish of Thomas Yriarte

A COUNTRY squire of greater wealth than wit
(For fools are often blessed with fortune's smile),
Had built a splendid house and furnished it
In splendid style.

"One thing is wanting," said a friend; "for though
The rooms are fine, the furniture profuse,
You lack a library, dear sir, for show,
If not for use."

" 'Tis true, but zounds!" replied the squire with glee,
"The lumber-room in yonder northern wing
(I wonder I ne'er thought of it) will be
The very thing.

"I'll have it fitted up without delay
With shelves and presses of the newest mode,
And rarest wood, befitting every way
A squire's abode.

"And when the whole is ready, I'll dispatch
My coachman—a most knowing fellow—down
To buy me, by admeasurement, a batch
Of books in town."

But ere the library was half supplied
  With all its pomps of cabinet and shelf,
The booby squire repented him, and cried
          Unto himself:

"This room is much more roomy than I thought;
  Ten thousand volumes hardly would suffice
To fill it, and would cost, however bought,
          A plaguey price.

THE SQUIRE'S LIBRARY

"Now, as I only want them for their looks,
  It might, on second thoughts, be just as good,
And cost me next to nothing, if the books
          Were made of wood.

"It shall be so, I'll give the shaven deal
  A coat of paint—a colorable dress,

To look like calf or vellum and conceal
Its nakedness.

"And, gilt and lettered with the author's name,
Whatever is most excellent and rare
Shall be, or seem to be ('tis all the same),
Assembled there."

The work was done, the simulated hoards
Of wit and wisdom round the chamber stood,
In binding some; and some, of course, in *boards*
Where all were wood.

From bulky folios down to slender twelves
The choicest tomes, in many an even row
Displayed their lettered backs upon the shelves,
A goodly show.

With such a stock as seemingly surpassed
The best collections ever formed in Spain,
What wonder if the owner grew at last
Supremely vain?

What wonder, as he paced from shelf to shelf
And conned their titles, that the squire began,
Despite his ignorance, to think himself
A learned man?

Let every amateur, who merely looks
To backs and binding, take the hint, and sell
His costly library—*for painted books*
Would serve as well.

Poetry means more to us and we get more enjoyment from reading it when we understand some of the difficulties that the poet has in writing it and can recognize those things which make it poetry in form.

For instance, you will notice in the poem which we have just read that every stanza has four lines; that, in printing, the first and third lines begin close to the margin, while the second and fourth lines begin a little farther in on the page—that is, they are *indented.* Now if you will look at the ends of the lines you will see that the words with which the first and third lines terminate are in rhyme, and that the words with which the second and fourth lines terminate are in rhyme. In other words, the indentation at beginning of lines in poetry calls attention to the rhymes.

It is true throughout *The Country Squire* that every pair of lines taken alternately ends in rhymes which are perfect or nearly so. Now a perfect rhyme is one in which the two rhyming syllables are both accented, the vowel sound and the consonants which follow the vowels are identical, and the sounds preceding the vowel are different. For instance, the words *smile* and *style* rhyme. Both of these are monosyllables and hence accented. The vowel sound is the long sound of *i;* the consonant sound of *l* follows. The sounds preceding the *i* are similar but not identical, represented by *sm* in the first case and *st* in the second. In the fifth stanza the first line ends with the word *dispatch*, the third with the word *batch.* This rhyme is perfect, because the accent on the word *dispatch* is naturally on the second syllable. In the ninth stanza the word *dress* is made to rhyme with *nakedness.* This is not strictly perfect, for the natural accent of *nakedness* is on the first syllable.

It may be interesting for beginners to work out the rhyme scheme of a poem and write it down. This is very easily done. Take the first stanza in *The Country Squire.* Represent the rhyming syllable of the first line by *a*, the rhyming syllable of the second line by *b*. It follows then that the rhyming syllable of the third line must be represented by *a*, and the rhyming syllable of the fourth line by *b.* Writing these letters in succession we have the nonsense word *abab*, which will always stand for stanzas of this kind. If you are interested in this turn to the studies at the end of the next poem, *To My Infant Son.*

TO MY INFANT SON

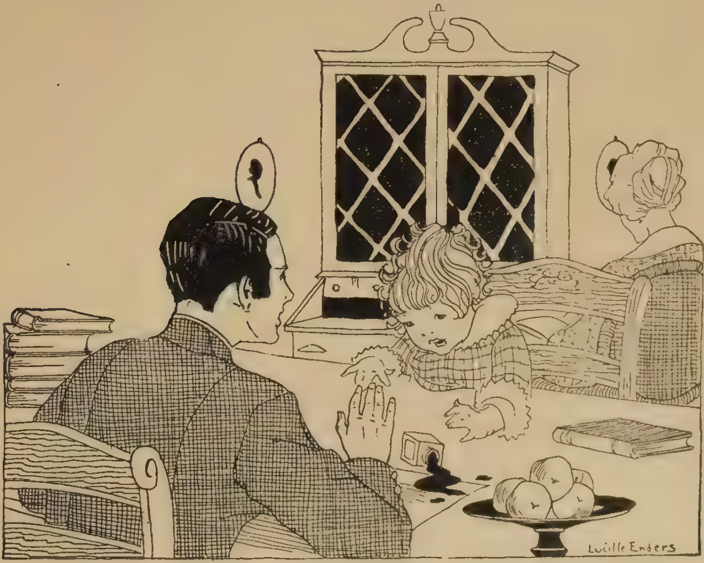
By Thomas Hood

THOU happy, happy elf!
(But stop, first let me kiss away that tear,)
Thou tiny image of myself!
(My love, he's poking peas into his ear,)
Thou merry, laughing sprite,
With spirits, feather light,
Untouched by sorrow, and unsoiled by sin;
(My dear, the child is swallowing a pin!)

Thou little tricksy Puck!
With antic toys so funnily bestuck,
Light as the singing bird that rings the air,—
(The door! the door! he'll tumble down the stair!)
Thou darling of thy sire!
(Why, Jane, he'll set his pinafore afire!)
Thou imp of mirth and joy!
In love's dear chain so bright a link,
Thou idol of thy parents;—(Drat the boy!
There goes my ink.)

Thou cherub, but of earth;
Fit playfellow for fairies, by moonlight pale,
In harmless sport and mirth,
(That dog will bite him, if he pulls his tail!)
Thou human humming-bee, extracting honey
From every blossom in the world that blows,
Singing in youth's Elysium ever sunny,—
(Another tumble! That's his precious nose!)

Thy father's pride and hope!
(He'll break that mirror with that skipping rope!)
With pure heart newly stamped from nature's mint,
(Where did he learn that squint?)
Thou young domestic dove!
(He'll have that ring off with another shove,)



"THERE GOES MY INK!"

Dear nursling of the hymeneal nest!
(Are these torn clothes his best?)
Little epitome of man!
(He'll climb upon the table, that's his plan,)
Touched with the beauteous tints of dawning life,
(He's got a knife!)

Thou enviable being!
No storms, no clouds, in thy blue sky foreseeing,

Play on, play on,
My elfin John!
Toss the light ball, bestride the stick,—
(I knew so many cakes would make him sick!)
With fancies buoyant as the thistle-down,
Prompting the face grotesque, and antic brisk,
With many a lamb-like frisk!
(He's got the scissors snipping at your gown!)
Thou pretty opening rose!
(Go to your mother, child, and wipe your nose!)
Balmy and breathing music like the south
(He really brings my heart into my mouth!)
Bold as a hawk, yet gentle as the dove;
(I'll tell you what, my love,
I cannot write unless he's sent above.)

The stanzas of this poem vary considerably in length, but it will be interesting to examine them according to the plans suggested at the end of the preceding poem, *The Country Squire*. The first stanza here has eight lines, the first four of them rhyming alternately in pairs, the next four in couplets. If now we apply the plan that is suggested for writing out the rhyme scheme, the word for the first stanza is *ababccdd*.

The second stanza has ten lines. Its rhyme scheme is evidently quite different, for here the first six lines rhyme in couplets and the last four alternately in pairs. The word to represent such a scheme is *aabbccdede*.

Can you write out the words which will represent the rhyme scheme in the other stanzas in this poem?

Find the other poems in this book and write out the rhyme scheme for them. Notice that in most poems the stanzas have the same number of lines, and that the rhyme scheme of one stanza is just like that of another. Take the other books in this series and turn to the poems, find what an endless variety of rhymes there is and how the scheme differs in different poems.

PRONUNCIATION OF PROPER NAMES

NOTE.—The pronunciation of difficult words is indicated by respelling them phonetically. *N* is used to indicate the French nasal sound; *K* the sound of *ch* in German; *ü* the sound of the German *ü*, and French *u*; *ö* the sound of *ö* in foreign languages.

ALGIDUS, *al′ ji dus*
ANJOU, *oN″ zhoo′*
ATHELSTANE, *ath′ el stane*
BANGWEOLO, *bang″ we o′ lo*
BECHUANALAND, *beck″ oo ah′ na land*
BOIS-GUILBERT, BRIAN DE, *bwah geel bayr′, bre oN′ deh*
CEDRIC, *ked′ rick*, or *sed′ rick*
CHALDEA, *kal de′ ah*
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES, *shahr″ zhay′ daf fayr′*
CHIAJA, *kyah′ ya*
FALERII, *fah le′ ry i*
FRONT-DE-BOEUF, *froN deh beuf′*
GIBAULT, *zhee bo′*
KHIVA, *ke′ vah*
LIGEIA, *li je′ yah*
MAISONVILLE, *may″ zoN veel′*
MALVOISIN, *mal vwah saN′*
MARESCHAL, *mahr′ shal*
MASSOUEY, *mas su′ y*
NAOMI, *nay o′ mi*
NGAMI, *ngah′ me*

NICARAGUA, *neẹ'' kar ah' gwah*
ONEIDA, *o ni' dah*
PSALMS, *sahms*
RAKSH, *rahksh*
ROWENA, *ro e' na*
RUSTUM, *roos' tum*
SAGA, *say' gah*
SEIUS, *se' yus*
SEISTAN, *says' tahn*
SENNACHERIB, *sen nak' e rib*
SOHRAB, *so' rahb*
TARPEIAN, *tahr pe' yan*
TONGRES, *toN' gr'*
VELASQUEZ, *vay lahs' kayth*
VENEZUELA, *ven e zwe' lah*
VINCENNES, *vin senz'*
YRIARTE, *e re ahr' tay*
ZOUCHE, *zooch*

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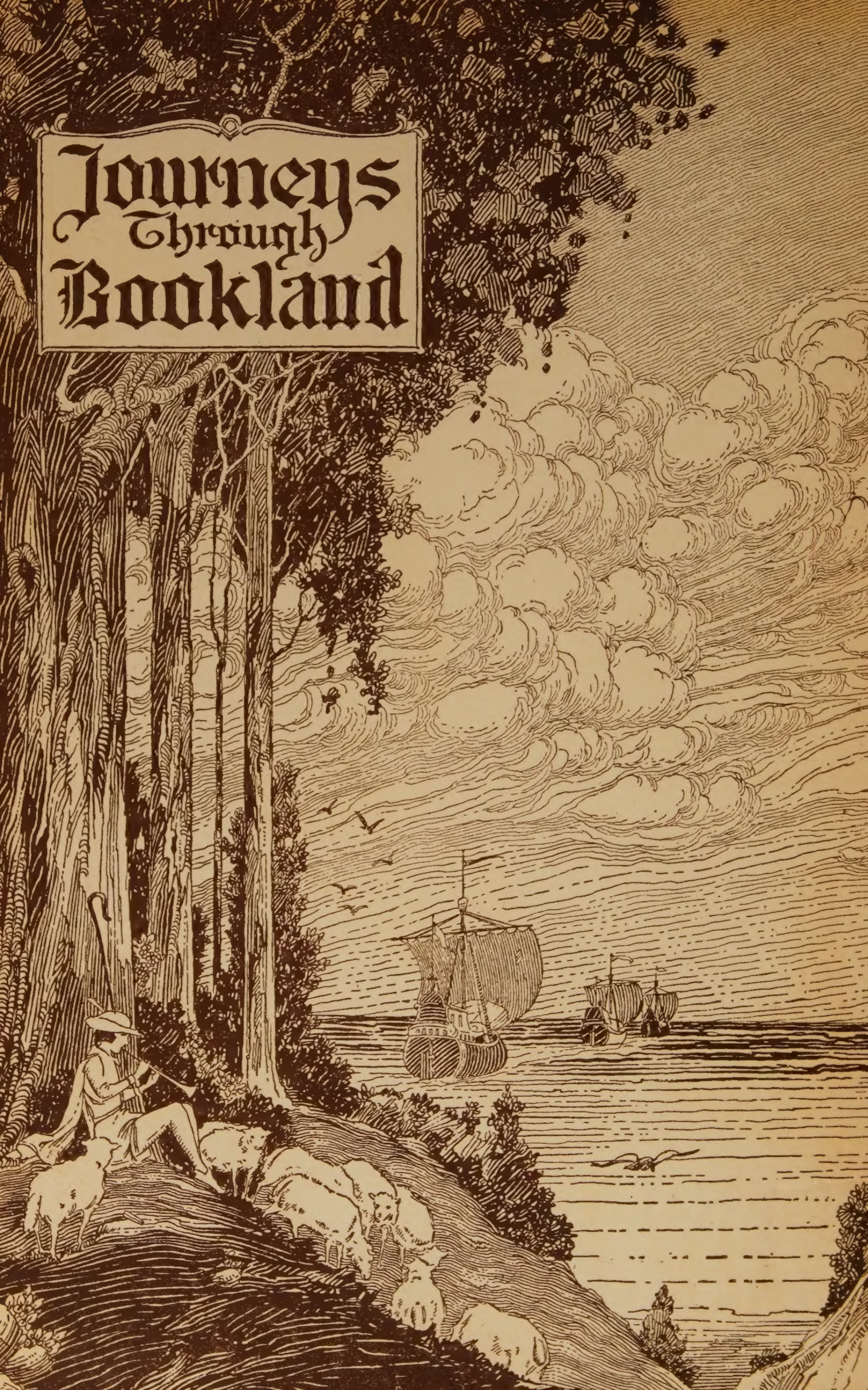
Journeys
Through
Bookland